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ABSTRACT

This project report describes the development of a literacy curriculum that introduced the elements of democracy. After reviewing existing print and video materials, a curriculum design team of literacy practitioners and civic activists prepared a draft curriculum and pilot tested it in six adult literacy classes. Based on feedback from teachers and students, a final curriculum was prepared. The final report is accompanied by the civic literacy curriculum. The curriculum consists of 20 2-hour lessons. EAch lesson states the purpose or the major theme and offers a thought-provoking reflection that could be used either to stimulate discussion or to encourage journal writing; a major reading section on civics; a vocabulary section; and reading comprehension questions. Throughout the lessons, there are exercises for small group or large group discussions. The lessons cover the following topics: introduction; a look at democracy; what is community; a clash of principles; civics and the social contract; the social context; Declaration of Independence; understanding the Declaration; democracy in action; Preamble to the Constitution; working government; understanding state and local government; politics and power; Bill of Rights; from the personal to the political; types of action; finding solutions; and suggestions for change. Other contents include an evaluation, list of useful texts, and handouts. (YLB)

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EDUCATION FOR DEMOCRACY

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ABSTRACT–SECTION 353 STAFF DEVELOPMENT FINAL REPORT

Title: Education for Democracy: Developing a Civic Literacy Curriculum

Project Number: 98-4031 **Funding:** 24,500

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Purpose--The MCOL developed and pilot tested a literacy curriculum which introduces the elements of democracy. In creating the curriculum contemporary speeches, news articles and video clips were used to enliven our nation's founding documents and demonstrate their relevancy to the lives of adult learners.

This curriculum encourages learners to utilize a range of skills—from sight word recognition, to whole language techniques, to improving writing skills, to critical thinking and problem solving techniques. Most importantly, the practice of these skills takes place in a "real life" context, through readings, discussions, and critical thinking exercises that are relevant to learners' lives. This curriculum can serve a range of learners, particularly those most disenfranchised—the homeless, parolees and probationers, and recovering substance abusers. These materials may also be of particular value to English as a Second Language learners who are preparing for citizenship.

Procedures: MCOL formed a curriculum design team of literacy practitioners and civic activists. After reviewing existing print and video materials the team prepared a draft curriculum and piloted tested it in six adult literacy classes. Based on the feedback from teachers and students, a final curriculum was prepared.

Summary of Findings: The curriculum effectively built literacy skills of adult learners while also helping learners understand the fundamental concepts of civic action. The curriculum had a direct result on voter participation, with 90% of participating learners who were non-voters casting their first ballots in elections held during the pilot test.

Comments: The curriculum was not effective in retaining learners who did not enter the class for the purpose of learning about civic issues. The curriculum should be pilot tested in a non-residential/non-mandatory classroom setting to ascertain its viability in that environment and its effectiveness in helping learners prepare for the GED exam.

Products--The Civic Literacy Curriculum

Descriptors

Final Report
Adult Education Act's Section 353 Funds
Mayor's Commission on Literacy in Philadelphia

"Education for Democracy: Developing a Civic Literacy Curriculum"

Introduction

More than a third of Philadelphia's adults lack functional literacy skills. This is a crisis which is more serious than just having a significant portion of our citizenry not knowing the marks on a page—it means that many of our adults are unable to understand their basic rights and obligations as citizens. Indeed, the groundbreaking National Adult Literacy Survey conducted in 1992, of 13,600 adults, concluded that there is a clear relationship between literacy skills and voting practices. As a result, the illiteracy crisis not only affects the individual, but it threatens the strength of our democratic society. To make informed decisions affecting the public good, to vote wisely, and to exercise their rights and responsibilities, our citizens must be literate.

The Commission's efforts to engage adult learners in our democratic processes is not simply motivated by concerns for promoting our democratic institutions and ensuring the basic rights of all citizens; it comes also from the need to find ways to directly promote literacy for empowerment. The Association for Community Based Education defines empowerment as "the ability to direct one's life rather than having it directed by others." The Commission fully ascribes to ACBE's perspective that "literacy must enable learners to challenge social forces that keep them passive or dependent. Literacy enables learners to create new realities." The Kettering Foundation report aptly points out that "through understanding the connections between their personal lives and public policies, adult learners can overcome the self-blame that inhibits most of their ability to learn and participate." In short, the Commission looks to develop curriculum materials which link the development of basic literacy skills with the

building of civic literacy skills.

By developing a Civic Literacy curriculum, the MCOL sought to build on its experience of linking voter education with basic education by developing a collection of instructional materials which promotes civic literacy in a manner which connects this new literacy with personal and community issues and challenges.

Adult educators have access to a plethora of civic literacy workbooks from numerous well respected publishers. Each resource offers valuable reading materials and some effective exercises. However, the existing instructional materials tend to impart knowledge from a national point of view with little reference to community struggles, particularly those which reflect minority, women's or working class experiences. Yet, the great majority of adult learners have an American experience that is working class and often minority. Another weakness of the existing materials is that they do not approach the issues from the perspective of the adult learner. For instance, the learners who worked with the Commission in 1992-93 were quite aware of the democratic virtues associated with voting. Their obstacle to political participation was not lack of information, but intimidation. Likewise, the existing materials do not link local issues with the concepts and processes enshrined in the Constitution and the Bill of Rights. Yet, citizen action is most widely demonstrated on local issues, such as education, housing and economic development policy and projects. For these reasons, the impact of the existing resources is very limited in terms of making democratic participation more accessible to adult learners, or increasing their literacy skills in a manner which will promote their participation.

It is essential that another limitation of the aforementioned resources be noted, as it further justifies the imperative for this innovative project. Each of the existing resources relies simply on the print medium. But the passion and potential of democracy can also be imaginatively reflected in audio and video

formats. For instance, learners who listen to Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. deliver his famous "I Have a Dream" speech may find their interest stirred in ways that will more effectively motivate them to learn to read the printed version of this moving call. Similarly, learners who watch a short cut from the movie *Nine to Five* may develop a clearer sense of women's rights or workplace protections, thus seeing the connection with the information in the aforementioned manuals. The Commission believes that by integrating audio and video resources into the instructional model, its approach of problem posing rather than knowledge depositing will generate a greater sense of relevance and adhesion of civic literacy skills.

The Commission expects that the Civic Literacy curriculum will be used by teachers working with learners who read above the 5th grade level. However, the approach can be translated to work with less advanced readers. Learners from urban low-income neighborhoods who are enrolled in adult learning classes in community-based organizations provided invaluable feedback and suggestions for the refinement of the materials.

This curriculum could also serve a range of learners. Practical, low reading level information about our rights and obligations as citizens and about the machinations of the democratic process will be invaluable for all basic education learners, particularly those most disenfranchised—the homeless, parolees and probationers, and recovering substance abusers. These materials will also be of particular value to English as a Second Language learners who are often pursuing U.S. citizenship.

Program Design

Goals and Objectives

The original goal of this project was to develop curriculum materials which enable adult learners to become active in the democratic processes in their communities by assisting them in the development of their civic literacy and basic literacy skills.

The original objectives of this endeavor were:

- to develop a set of instructional materials which stimulate the development of civic literacy and basic literacy skills of adult learners;
- to engage a diverse group of adult learners in the process of developing the curriculum materials;
- to utilize a mix of audio, video and print mediums to promote the development of civic literacy skills; and
- to generate a sense of democratic responsibility among adult learners.

The project's objectives were to be measured by the Commission's ability to complete the development of a tested curriculum. Further, since the materials were to be pilot tested at four sites, the response to the materials and their effectiveness with respect to demonstrated impact on building basic skills were to be measured. Pre- and post-testing instruments were expected to gauge the degree to which the materials had an impact on learners, and copious records were to be kept of learner feedback to the materials.

In addition to pre- and post-assessments of the materials, the Commission expected to gauge the impact of this undertaking by the degree to which the learners increased their participation in the electoral processes and/or community/civic improvement activities.

The Commission's experience suggested that the overall goal and concomitant objectives were achievable in the time frame allotted. The project's timetable provided adequate time for the preparation of the materials (3 months), pilot use of the materials, gathering learner feedback and adjustment of the materials (7 months), and final preparation of the materials (2 months).

Administration

The overall administration for this project was the responsibility of Donna Cooper, Executive Director of the MCOL. The specific execution of the project, including organizing and disseminating a needs assessment survey to all Philadelphia literacy providers, developing low level reading materials which reinforce citizen empowerment, selecting eligible learning sites; collecting feedback data and compiling results, was expected to be the responsibility of Ione Graves, the Director of Education of the MCOL. In addition, a curriculum developer was to be hired to work directly with learners as the print, audio and video materials were created and refined. The criteria for selecting a curriculum developer were to include: an individual who has previous experience with preparing curriculum materials; ability to work collectively with adult learners; an understanding of the goals of this project; and experience related to activities that help leaners build their civic literacy capabilities.

The Commission expected to test the materials at a minimum of four literacy sites. Staff from these agencies were expected to work collaboratively with the Commission in the review and testing of the materials. The Commission also planned to work jointly with the Institute for the Study of Civic Values (ISCV) in developing the materials. This partnership was struck in order to take advantage of ISCV's expertise in developing educational materials relating to civic action.

Implementation Design

In order to develop a relevant and tested curriculum, the Commission planned to implement this project in four phases:

- Survey of interest and capability (includes needs assessment)
- Development of curriculum materials
- Pilot testing of materials and collection of learner writings
- Dissemination

Survey of Interest and Capability

In the first phase of the project, the Commission's goal was to select at least four locations where the staff and learners had an informed and interested desire to assist in the development of these materials. As sites would not receive any remuneration for participation in this phase, the Commission expected that only those sites with a sincere interest in the goals of this effort would respond.

The first phase of the project was to take place in the first two months of the project and involve a survey of all Philadelphia adult literacy sites to determine individual program interest in the project and elicit responses from adult educators about the need for civic education in their communities. Interested sites with more than 10 intermediate learners (those at least on a 5th grade level) were to fill out an application for participation in the project. It was projected that at least four sites would be selected to participate in the pilot test.

The criteria for site selection was:

- prior experience with civic education;
- prior experience with learner involvement in the program; and,
- ability to demonstrate learner interest in the project.

Adjustment in the selection process could be made to address multicultural diversity and the PA State Department of Education priority of serving special populations. Geographic proximity was also expected to influence the decision, as the curriculum developer would be expected to travel to all four sites regularly.

Development of Curriculum Materials

Simultaneous with site selection, the Commission planned to move into the second phase of the project.

In this phase several tasks were:

- review of historic and other documents for inclusion in the instructional program;
- translation of selected documents to a 4th-6th grade reading level;
- research and collection of personal stories of various people involved in or living during the founding of the nation including women, Native Americans, minorities and men both those who owned land and those who did not;
- selection of audio and video examples of the principles espoused in the founding documents; and
- draft curriculum.

The curriculum developer was expected to work directly with the Director of Education in the preparation of these materials. The documents to be reviewed included the Constitution, Bill of Rights, documents of local public agencies, and speeches which might be of interest to the learners in the program.

Audio components to be reviewed included speeches by Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., former presidents or elected officials, and justices and/or community activists. The video selections were to be excerpted from contemporary cinema and were to include scenes from *Do the Right Thing, A Raisin in the Sun, Nine to Five, The Color Purple, The Grapes of Wrath, The Civil War, and* D.W. Griffith's *"Birth of a Nation,"* etc.

Specific selections from these materials were to be dubbed onto one audio- and one videotape so that they would be easy to include in both the pilot test of the materials and the final curriculum.

Pilot Testing of Materials and Collection of Learner Writings

In the third phase, the Commission planned to discuss the curriculum materials with the learners to gather feedback on their relevancy and their presentation. Guidance regarding activities associated with the basic materials would also be sought from learners. Learner reaction to the audio and video selections were to be carefully recorded as were any alternative suggestions for materials offered by the learners. The Commission expected to carry out the pilot test of the materials in each of the selected sites.

The final phase was planned to explore the curriculum's ability to translate the learners' newly developed skills into citizen action. The Instructor was expected to work with the learners throughout the pilot test to find at least one community concern or political issue that the learners commonly shared. The instructor would offer examples of various types of citizen action, such as writing a letter to a Congressperson, sending a news release to a community paper, hosting an event or testifying before City Council. The Commission and the learners were to record any citizen action activities derived from the pilot for inclusion in the final curriculum.

Five months were set aside for the pilot phase of this project, including 40 hours of testing (two hours per week times 20 weeks). Four groups of at least 10 learners were expected to participate in the pilot test phase.

The Commission looked toward the development of a curriculum which posed problem-solving situations for learners so that through the review of materials their critical thinking processes would be developed and incorporated into the final products. The Commission adopted the ACBE approach to effective problem posing methodology:

- identifying a **generative theme,** which is an issue, topic or problem which stirs strong emotion and interest in further learning and action;

- creating **codes** or personally meaningful depictions of the theme—i.e., a skit, story, drawing;
- facilitating **critical reflection** where learners explore the options for resolving or addressing the theme;
- enabling **action** offers the participants a means to achieve a personal or social goal associated with the theme; and
- building **literacy skills** by providing readings and activities which build on the theme.

The Commission was to follow this instructional format to implement the testing of the curriculum materials. For instance, the class could have identified welfare rights or improved housing as their generative theme. To help the learners encode this theme, they would review aspects of the Bill of Rights, and relevant speeches and video passages which supported their understanding of the theme. The learners could then translate the theme and its meaning to their own context through a coding process. They could choose to develop a skit, a song or drawing depicting their perspective on the theme. Learners would again review historic and contemporary civic documents and audio or video passages to help them reflect on the theme and develop options for action to address their concerns or common problems. The Instructor would help the learners build their critical thinking skills by soliciting options for action from the learners and by encouraging them to read and reflect on the past experiences of civic activists. The learners would be asked to agree on a set of actions they wanted to undertake and then work to develop the skills necessary to take action. For instance, the group members could decide to write a news article for publication in a community newspaper, or send a letter to a governmental official. Throughout each phase, the learners would be expected to build their reading and writing skills.

To prepare the learners to select the generative theme, and to assist them throughout the learning process, the Commission would develop low-level translations of several of the nation's founding documents. By learning from these translations, the participants would be able to build their reading and vocabulary skills through a whole language approach.

The other materials necessary for the project were the audio and video selections to be integrated into the curriculum as the generative theme was developed, during the coding phase and while the learners critically reviewed the options for addressing the theme.

Finally, the Commission anticipated the inclusion of learners' writings in the final version of the curriculum. These writings were be chosen from the four pilot locations with the expressed consent of the learners.

Dissemination

Dissemination of the Civic Literacy curriculum was expected to include publicizing of the materials through the networks provided by Tutors of Literacy in the Commonwealth and through the AdvancE Clearinghouse. The MCOL, and the ISCV will apply to present information about their roles in this project and its outcomes at the 1994 PAACE Midwinter Conference. The Commission also expected to offer a staff development workshop open to all Philadelphia-based adult literacy providers toward the end of the project with the hopes that other agencies would include the materials in their FY `94-95 curriculum planning.

In addition, the Commission planned to sponsor an essay contest, thereby offering a clear framework for learners to discuss the most important aspects of what they learned through the pilot.

The MCOL sought to integrate materials and methods from the National Issues Forums into this project in order to make use of the work already accomplished in the area of convening groups of citizens to share ideas and effect

change. A copy of the final document would be sent to the National Issues Forum.

Finally, the MCOL's Director of Education was to compile the results of the project, including curricula developed and samples of learners' writing, into a final report for submission to the Pennsylvania Department of Education. To ensure national dissemination, the Commission expected submit an article about the curriculum to ACBE or another national association for publication in their newsletter.

Evaluation

The Commission identified both process and impact indicators of progress.

Process

- Completion of a survey of literacy providers and selection of four qualified sites for participation in the civic literacy pilot test.
- Development of the basic curriculum materials for pilot testing by January 1, 1994.
- Implementation of a pilot test of the materials in at least four locations by June 1, 1994.
- Completion of the audio and video materials by June 30, 1994.
- Inclusion of learners' writings and feedback to complete the curriculum by June 30, 1994.

Impact

The clearest indicator of the project's success would be the degree to which learners:

- registered to vote;
- voted in local, state and federal elections; and/or
- became involved in civic activities.

The Commission expected to use a pre- and post-test model for the impact evaluation. Basic demographic information was to be obtained for all participating learners. Additionally, each learner's voting history, experience with civic activities and familiarity with America's historic documents would be recorded. .

The Director of Education was to be responsible for tracking the progress and recording the Commission's progress toward these process evaluative benchmarks.

Proposed Time-Line

July - August, 1993	Conduct a survey of Philadelphia literacy sites to identify programs interested in participating in the project and to gather feedback from educators. Select four sites with more than 10 intermediate learners to participate in the project.
July-September, 1993	Prepare learning materials for the project, including a review of historic and other documents, translation of selected documents to a 4th to 6th grade reading level, collection of personal stories of historical figures, selection of audio and video examples and a draft of the program curriculum.
October, 93 - April, 1994	Pilot test curriculum materials and sponsor the essay contest.
May - June, 1994	Compile results of project into a final report.

Progress Toward Goals

Introduction

Substantively all goals of the Education for Democracy project were achieved. A preliminary curriculum was developed integrating contemporary themes with the seminal documents that define our nation. Pilot testing took place with six classes of adult learners. Based on learners input, the materials were adjusted, new segments were added and some original exercises were deleted. The final curriculum reflects the experience of learner and teachers, inclusive of student writings, a montage of video clips and creative resources for linking the fundamental concepts of democracy with the current challenges to our national experiment in governance.

Based on feedback from the curriculum development team, two aspects of the process for developing the curriculum were eliminated. Instead of conducting a needs assessment of sites, those sites which were interested in participating in the project were included on the curriculum development team. The essay contest was also eliminated, because it did not seem relevant once the project was underway.

The impact of the project was highest at four residential treatment programs. At these sites, the participation, skill enhancement and voter registration rates were impressively high. Classes conducted in two community based settings were less successful with respect to retention and voter registration rates.

Upon notice of the grant award, the Commission invited a team of experienced adult educators and civic activists to a meeting to discuss the development of a Civic Literacy curriculum. Two educators who work with community based literacy agencies, Darryl Gordon and Lynette Hazelton, were asked to lead the design team. Ms. Hazelton was given a contract to serve as the Curriculum Developer; Ms. Gordon was contracted to assist her. Ms. Hazelton

worked with the Commission in 1992-93 on a successful, yet more modest effort to link election education with an adult education class at Community Women's Education Project. Ms. Gordon's experience linking the issues of empowerment and education at the Lutheran Settlement House Women's Program and her outstanding presentations in local staff development seminars were the contributing factors in her selection. Other members of the design team included Michael Marsico and Ed Schwartz of the Institute for the Study of Civic Values. The Institute's long history of training community members for civic action and their experience operating a PDE supported adult education program were considered assets of their participation. Some meetings also benefited from the participation of Cliff Lee of the Kensington Joint Action Council's English as a Second Language program and Joe Beech, the adult educator for the Genesis II residential treatment program.

Needs Assessment and Selection of Sites

At the first meeting the curriculum design team discussed the need to conduct a survey of literacy agencies to determine their interest and input into the curriculum. Given that programs are closed during the summer, team members agreed that delaying the development of the curriculum until a survey was conducted could jeopardize the possibility of completing a pilot test before the end of the grant period. The members of the team felt that pilot testing would provide more critical and substantive input than a blind survey. As a result, the planned survey was not conducted. Rather, members of the design team planned to maintain journals of learner reactions throughout the pilot test phase.

The original plan linked site selection with response to the survey. Since the survey was eliminated, a new criteria for site selection needed to be developed. The design team suggested that the ISCV adult education program provide two of the four test sites -- one class in South Philadelphia and one in Southwest Philadelphia. It was also suggested that the curriculum be tested in a residential

setting. Two factors influenced this decision:

- The adult educator at Genesis II Adult Education program had a strong interest in linking civic action with basic skills improvement.
- The mandatory nature of classes in a residential setting would ensure that a large group of learners would attend every class and provided the ongoing feedback necessary for the refinement of the curriculum.

The design team felt that a more closed and closely controlled pilot test would yield more substantive information than the original design would have permitted. Therefore, the sites selected to participate in the pilot test were:

- ISCV- South Philadelphia
- ISCV - Southwest Philadelphia
- Genesis II - residential -
- Genesis - residential - males only
- Caton House - residential - females only

Development of curriculum materials

Designing the curriculum was a lengthy and thought provoking process. As the design team explored approaches many questions arose:

- Should the historic documents be translated to a lower literacy level ? Or, would it be better for learners to build their vocabulary and comprehension skills by reading short excerpts from the original documents?
- Should the materials have a point a view - i.e. progressive, liberal or conservative? Or would it better to show both sides of the issues regarding democracy that have been, or are, hotly debated?
- Should audio tapes be used, when video is the prevailing medium?
- How will the backbone of the curriculum be defined? How can we build literacy and civic action skills simultaneously?

- How can a curriculum be developed that solicits themes from students rather than defining important issues for them?

To help answer these questions the design team took the following steps:

1. Review of historic documents, notable speeches and numerous adult education instructional manuals focused on the theme of democracy or citizenship.

Ms. Hazelton collected copies of the Declaration of Independence, Bill of Rights and the Constitution. In addition, she reviewed dozens of existing adult education resources with a democracy theme that were in the Mayor's Commission on Literacy's Resource Center. The Commission also received materials from AdvancE for Ms. Hazelton's review. With support from the Commission, Ms. Hazelton also attended the Writing and the Bill of Rights Conference conference held at Bard College, where she gathered additional materials for review.

2. Research and collection of personal stories and provocative quotes from individuals involved in critical events in American history including slaves, suffragists, Native Americans, minorities , union members and community activists.

Ms. Hazelton and Ms. Gordon also collected information from less traditional sources. Once both the formal documents and the informal accounts and quotes were collected, the curriculum development team poured over the materials to select the most salient documents or portions thereof. Although the structure of the curriculum was not fully defined at this point, an approach began to take shape at this early stage of the process. The answers to several questions became self evident. For instance, after looking at the documents the group decided that translation into a lower literacy level was not necessary. Since

the intent of the class was to introduce the concepts of democracy and civic action, the team decided to include portions of the unaltered documents as part of the formal classroom lessons.

The team also decided that to the extent possible the concepts of democracy would be approached by raising questions meant to stimulate debate.

3. Research and collection of and video clips which raised or debated the principles espoused in the founding documents

Selection of the appropriate video clips engendered controversy among members of the design team. Concerns about the length of selected segments versus class time, the degree to which the clips would impose a perspective or values, need for multi-cultural sensitivity, and the struggle to pick the perfect clip for the critical issues of the curriculum were hotly debated.

Ed Schwartz prepared a tape of numerous clips which reflected the key themes developed by the design team. This tape became the basis of what was finally included in the curriculum.

The design team rejected the use of an audio tape because it would require the teacher to track down a second piece of equipment and because it is a less compelling format than video.

Once the videotape, documents and interesting tidbits were in hand, the most difficult part of the process of preparing the curriculum began. In order for Ms. Hazelton and Ms. Gordon to proceed, the team had to agree on the goals of the curriculum. Through several meetings the goals and approach for the curriculum were explored. Resolution was reached on the following goals:

1. Improve the reading and writing skills of learners who are reading at between the 5th grade to 8th grade levels.
2. Improve the critical thinking skills of adult learners.
3. Increase adult learners' knowledge of historical documents to help

them prepare for the GED.

4. Create a forum for a class, or a small group of learners, to take civic action, based on the ACBE generative theme model

With respect to the instructional approach, whole language and language experience approaches were identified as the primary models for reading and writing.

Ms. Hazelton and Ms. Gordon worked over a period of three months to outline and write the preliminary curriculum. Interim meetings were held to provide feedback. These feedback meetings were typically short and positive, which indicated to the group members that the several months of polemic discussion and hot debate had effectively moved all design team members toward agreement on the fundamental issues.

Pilot testing of materials and collection of learner writings

Pilot tests began in late February. The untested curriculum was expected to require 40 hours. Classes were structured to meet twice a week, two hours a session for ten weeks.

The classes offered by ISCV were the first to begin. The Institute recruited learners by distributing flyers in the target neighborhoods, and by sending press releases to run community newspapers. While the promotion was explicit about the civic content of the class, many individuals responded seeking help with preparing for the GED. The class in the Southwest section of the city began with 10 leaners. However, this class never stabilized and the attendance of all class members was erratic.

The South Philadelphia class was particularly slow to begin, and never amassed the target number (10) students.

According to the teacher, Caroline Ferguson,

Initially there was a problem recruiting learners for the class. The class location was moved from South Philadelphia to Center City in order to make it more accessible, and perhaps more attractive to learners. This was somewhat successful; the class had a total of six members at one point. The problem of attracting learners was a serious one; some learners entered the class who clearly had difficulty with the reading level of the material.

Comments from Ms. Ferguson's final report included:

...The learners found the materials very interesting because while many had gone through some high school, they either did not remember this material, or it had not been taught this way. We taught the material from the perspective of what these forms of government mean to the people who live under them; who has power, who does not. Who, not what ,is considered valuable and important. One of the most lively sessions was when we looked at the laws created by the first colonists and what those laws said about the kind of place in which they wanted to live. We then made up our laws and talked about what they said about us and how we wanted to live.

The second half of the course was not as successful as the first half. Learners wanted a tighter correlation between the course and the GED test; they did not believe that this material would be enough to prepare them for the Social Studies section of the GED.

The experience at the residential treatment centers was the very different from that of ISCV. Retention and attendance concerns were mitigated by the therapeutic policy which mandates class attendance. Mandatory retention does not necessarily translate into learner interest and active participation. In this case, however, many of the learners were enthralled by the materials and

approach. Classes that were scheduled to last two hours could not be ended until three or three and half hours of discussion finally tired out the learners. The interest level in the material was extraordinarily high. Comments form the teacher's journal included:

February, 22 - What is Community

We stood by the T.V. today so we could watch the video clip (Do the Right Thing). Before seeing the clip we discussed the questions. Most learners related the questions to the community at the rehab.

After we discussed the "community" questions, we read "The Puritans Come to America." Definitions of :Puritans" had to be given. The conversation went into why all different types of people came to America!

We watched the clip. This got some people upset, others got excited. Lots of slang started to go around and there was a discussion about Blacks, Whites, Chinese, Indians, etc. ., and about stereotypes that people have.

I tried to relate these stereotypes to the Pilgrims, Puritans, Quakers and how they may have felt about the Indians.

There was lots of lively discussion in this class. I feel that the clip enlightened them, but I did feel a little intimidated occasionally -- especially when the discussions got stereotypical. There wasn't a sleepy eye in the class, though.

March, 29 - Civil and Social Contract

Contracts discussion concerning obligations to one another were discussed. There was a discussion of why the focus of the curriculum was on White American History. I'll try to bring in books on Black American History and use excerpts from these books.

April 5 -Social Contracts/Forces that Unite

The reading from "Black History for Beginners" (pages 65-78) created more enthusiasm than the reading in the curriculum. It worked particularly

well with the section on the "Usefulness of Crime" reading and activity. It offers a different perspective on the usefulness of crime as a force for liberation.

Lesson 11 - How Government Works

In discussion exercises the class compared the rehab government to a dictatorship.

I'm becoming concerned that residents might use what we learned to organize some protests against the rehab authorities. That would be touchy - or even mean my job...

Lesson 12 - State and Local Government

...All completed exercises on identifying local officials and they all got together to write a letter to state representatives and city officials.

Lessons 18-19

Back to back exercises work great. Standing and getting the support you need was interesting. Also the discussion that followed was interesting:

How do you get support organized to be effective?

How can you carry those who stumble or leave from non-interest, etc.?

Problems identified were drugs, jobs and crime. Drugs became the primarily one for these groups. They have been making a list of possible actions they could take as a group to try to get some recognition and solutions they feel might work in the hands of elected officials..

Monthly meetings with the adult educators involved with the pilot test were scheduled. These meetings provided the three teachers with the opportunity to share techniques, learner responses and suggestions for the final document.

A final meeting was held at the end of the course, where the three teachers worked with the writers to make the final changes to the curriculum. The "Declaration of Independence" written by the learners at Genesis II was selected for inclusion in the curriculum as the example of the student writing.

Reflections and Suggestions

It seems apparent that a general community-based tutoring program may have a problem retaining learners when using this curriculum. However, a classroom program where learners have made a commitment to attend regularly, and are interested in improving their basic skills, may be a conducive and exciting setting in which to use this curriculum.

Caroline Ferguson offered the following suggestions for improvement after the curriculum was completed:

Tie the course more closely to the GED. Use the questions from the history and social studies sections of the text.

Re-arrange the course so that learners interact with their communities earlier in the course.

The course would work better if it was more closely tied to a community, either geographically or based on a common experience of a group of learners.

Lynette Hazelton, the lead Curriculum Developer, had the following concluding thoughts:

The Civic Literacy project represents the lead educational process. It is an interdisciplinary project, using a variety of media to move the student from history and abstract theory, to current events and concrete themes to case studies arising from their own experiences. It then empowers them through knowledge to make a change in their lives.

In terms of the project being used as is - my suggestion is perhaps some teacher training with teachers such as Joe Beech who taught the curriculum several times. Teachers could take advantage of his experience in order to help them maximize the effectiveness of the curriculum.

I also wonder how the project could be incorporated into a general

literacy or GED program. My concern is that adults and administrators will consider it an interesting but not vital course -- along the lines of math or English-- and will shy away from civic literacy. However, if teachers could be shown how to easily incorporate this into what they are already doing, I think it would reach more students, although it would take longer to cover the entire course.

I also wonder about the idea of introducing this to high school students, especially as they become of voting age.

If the sky was the limit, I would try to have guest speakers and trips to both Washington and Harrisburg. I would also want students to meet local decision makers and attend a live political press conference (of course all at the expense of a generous foundation).

Dissemination

Dissemination of the Civic Literacy curriculum will occur by the placement of articles in newsletters such as What's the Buzz?, Tutors of Literacy in the Commonwealth, and ACBE. State and national resource centers such as AdvancE Clearinghouse, National Issues Forum, National Center on Adult Literacy and the National Institute for Literacy will also be sent information about the curriculum. The National Constitution Center and other organizations concerned with civic study will also be contacted. The MCOL will apply to present Civic Literacy Curriculum and its outcomes at the 1994 PAACE Midwinter Conference.

The Commission had planned to sponsor an essay contest, thereby offering a clear framework for learners to discuss the most important aspects of what they learned through the pilot. However, the largest group of learners choose to work together and re-write the Declaration of Independence rather than an essay.

Education for Democracy

A Civic Literacy Curriculum

Mayor's Commission on Literacy
1500 Walnut Street, 18th floor
Philadelphia, PA 19102
215-685-6602

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

PREFACE

You are a citizen of the United States, but what exactly does this mean? In the most simple terms, it means that in exchange for your support of the government, you receive its protection.

Is this, however, what happens?

Our Declaration of Independence states lofty goals of equality and of how government should ensure life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. The Constitution developed a plan for a government that would have these goals built into the legal structure. The Bill of Rights clearly describes the rights of citizens.

Still our democratic government, considered one of the best in the world, comes under constant attack. Some argue that the government does too little, too late and that too few benefit. Others state democracy is a governmental system where a few manipulate the majority for their personal gain while problems, such as those of the inner-city, go ignored.

Could these attacks themselves, however, be one sign of success of democracy because our government is not attempting to censure this strong criticism?

The purpose of this civic literacy course is to study and discuss this country's democratic processes and encourage students to draw their own conclusions. As Hanna Arlene Fingeret, Ph.D. of Literacy South stated, "A healthy democracy depends upon citizens who are able to use information critically."

Students will look closely at the ideal of democracy, their own roles as citizens, as well as critically examining where it has worked and where it hasn't.

Finally, students will be asked to assess the strengths and weaknesses of government as it relates to their own lives, develop alternatives where they find shortcomings and create strategies for implementing them. Thus students will gain a deeper understanding for the complexities, strengths, weaknesses and importance of their own role in a democracy.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This curriculum is the result of a unique collaboration between practitioners in the field of adult literacy and urban development. The guiding principle for all involved is that civic literacy will enable learners to examine more critically the political forces that shape their lives and communities and to identify and seek to improve deficient situations.

The development of this curriculum was supported by a grant from the Pennsylvania Department of Education under the aegis of the Mayor's Commission on Literacy. The Commission is also grateful for the generous support of the Samuel S. Fels Fund which made this project possible. It was the joint work of Donna Cooper, executive director of the Mayor's Commission on Literacy; Ed Schwartz, president, Institute for the Study of Civic Values; and adult literacy practitioner Daryl Gordon. Lynette Hazelton developed and wrote the curriculum. Thanks also to teachers Joe Beech, Mike Marsico, and Caroline Ferguson who field tested the curriculum.

TO THE INSTRUCTOR

In developing this curriculum, every effort has been made to fully integrate the goals of a civics course with the goals of an adult literacy course to create an interesting, informative program.

Each of the 20 two-hour lessons contains a major theme that is explained in the section entitled Purpose. This is followed by a thought-provoking reflection which could be used either to stimulate discussion or to encourage journal writing. There is a major reading section on civics followed by a vocabulary section and reading comprehension questions.

Please note that the vocabulary section was intentionally left blank to encourage students to select the words they are personally unfamiliar with, to look them up and perhaps share them with the class.

Throughout the lessons, there are exercises for small group or large group discussions. Finally, in many of the lessons you will find a variety of exercises to encourage critical reflection.

The final four lessons are student-driven as students work in-class on a specific problem of their choosing. Students will be asked to research the problem, design reasonable alternatives and determine how they would work to have them implemented.

These materials are intended as a guide only and not to stifle creative classroom techniques.

ACTIVITIES

All of the activities in the manual share a common theme. They establish a conflict and require cooperation of the learners to reach a successful resolution. These activities were designed to help foster a better understanding of the principles behind democracy by placing students in situations which "test" otherwise abstract theories.

By participating in the activities, students will better understand the value of cooperation and the difficulties involved in trying to develop group cohesion.

It is recommended that the instructor resist the urge to offer too much help to the students. Instead, allow them this opportunity for critical analysis and problem solving.

VIDEO GUIDE

☆ NOTE TO INSTRUCTOR:

To help explain some of the principles discussed in this course, a video is available with excerpts from popular movies. Each clip is preceded by a brief introduction which includes discussion questions for your students to consider as they watch the clip. You can then use the clip and the information from the lesson to launch a more in-depth discussion. A video clip is planned for use with lessons 3, 8, 9, 11, 12, 13 and 16.

☆ LESSON 3: WHAT IS COMMUNITY—*DO THE RIGHT THING*

Clip Introduction—There are forces within the community that both strengthen and weaken the community. How do racial stereotypes affect a community, especially how do they divide the community.

☆ LESSON 8: DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE—*RAISIN IN THE SUN*

Clip Introduction—How does the white man impinge upon the family's "pursuit of happiness"? Have you ever been in a situation where someone tried to thwart you or your family's pursuit of happiness. What did you or your family do? Do you think the family in the film will be happy?

☆ LESSON 9: UNDERSTANDING THE DECLARATION—*I HAVE A DREAM, COLOR PURPLE*

Clip Introduction—After viewing both clips, who would you say was left out of the protections and benefits guaranteed by the Declaration of Independence? Is this still true?

☆ **LESSON 11: WORKING GOVERNMENT—*JESSE JACKSON SPEECH***

Clip Introduction—Do you think most politicians understand you and the problems of your neighborhood? Why or why not? After viewing the clip, explain why Jesse Jackson is saying he is different. Who is Jesse Jackson trying to appeal to in his speech? What are the similarities between his speech and Dr. Martin Luther King's "I Have A Dream" speech?

☆ **LESSON 12: UNDERSTANDING STATE & LOCAL GOVERNMENT—*HARVEY MILK***

Clip Introduction—How do people not in the mainstream, such as racial minorities or gay and lesbian people, get political power?

☆ **LESSON 13: POLITICS AND POWER—*CITY OF HOPE***

Clip Introduction—As you view this clip, consider the following questions. What are the problems in this community? Are they depicted accurately in the film? Do you have similar problems in your community? What do you think of the citizens' response to the problem? Do you think this could work in real life? Why or why not?

☆ **LESSON 16: THE PERSONAL TO THE POLITICAL—*NORMA RAE***

Clip Introduction—How does Norma Rae get power? What type of power does she have? How does she convince people to support the union? What risks does she take to do this? What would you have done in her situation? Why do you think she takes such risks?

☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆

In addition to the above-listed video clips, the instructors who field tested this manual found two other resources useful in teaching this curriculum.

Frederick Douglas, Black Americans of Achievement Series, 1992., Schlessinger Video Productions, Library Video Company, Bala Cynwyd, PA 215-667-0200.

Black History for Beginners by Denise Dennis and Susan Wilmarth

☆

PRE COURSE SURVEY

Name: _____

Date: _____

1. Are you registered to vote?

   _____ yes _____ no

2. Are you an active member of any civic, community or neighborhood organization(s)?

   _____ yes _____ no

3. Have you participated in a civic, community or neighborhood organization's activitiies within the past three years?

   _____ yes _____ no

INTRODUCTION

LESSON 1:

☆ **PURPOSE:**

To begin to reflect on the nature of community and the purpose it serves.

☆ **REFLECTION:**

"No man is an island..." John Donne

☆ **READING ACTIVITY:**

Imagine you, along with several others, have just been shipwrecked and land on a small deserted island. No one is certain when you will be rescued. Several people are badly hurt but alive. A few young children also survived but were orphaned. Three people are experienced naturalists and outdoors experts and have the necessary talents to help the group survive in the wild. One woman is a medical doctor. There is some food, shelter and water, but it is clear that decisions regarding rationing these vital resources will have to be made.

☆ **DISCUSSION:**

Work in small groups and try to answer three questions. Appoint someone within each group to record the group's responses.

1. Will badly injured survivors who cannot contribute to the group's well-being be entitled to the same resources as able-bodied survivors?

2. Does anyone have responsibility to care for the orphaned children? If so, who?

3. Should the naturalists and doctor get special privileges to ensure their survival since they have special and necessary skills?

4. One of the weaker survivors steals food from another. What should the group do?

☆ **REPORT:**

The small groups return and report their answers. As an entire class, compare and contrast the various responses.

☆

☆ READ:

It is clear that some system of rules is needed to address these issues. That is exactly what a government is—a system of rules used to manage a community.

Throughout the ages, people have been grappling with the best way to govern and thus manage conflict, diversity and limited resources. Here are a few of the most common methods:

anarchy	absence of government
aristocracy	government by a hereditary clan of nobles or government of the "best" people
autocracy	government by one person with absolute power such as a dictator
bureaucracy	government through a complex structure of administrative bureaus
democracy	government by the people
gerontocracy	government by elderly people
meritocracy	government by those with highest academic achievement
monarchy	government by a single ruler such as a king
oligarchy	government by a small privileged class
plutocracy	government by wealthy or a group of wealthy people who control or influence government
theocracy	government of priests claiming to rule with authority from God

☆ EXERCISE:

Think how you handled the decision making process on the deserted island with your shipwrecked companions. Consider the above list. Which of the systems above best describes the system you created for the island?

What do you think are the benefits and disadvantages of each of these forms of government?

Who would benefit and who would be disadvantaged under each type of system?

SHIPWRECK

☆ PREPARATION

Assign learner identities of shipwreck victims that are suggested in the first lesson—orphaned children, injured people, naturalists, doctors etc. To make the exercise more interesting, assign more specific roles. For example:

1. One of the orphaned children refuses to come along.
2. One of the hurt persons is delirious and incoherent.
3. Some of the survivors are unconccious.

☆ ACTIVITY

Place learners in one corner of the class, which represents the island upon which they are shipwrecked, and present them with the following challenge:

"You are shipwrecked on this island and you are surrounded by water (represented by the bare floor). The water contains man-eating sharks which will devour you if you touch the water. Your task is to get off the rock and go to the mainland (the opposite corner of the class) without touching the water (bare floor). If anyone touches the bare floor, that learner is out and all the other learners must begin again.

Allow students ten minutes to work through the exercise without input from the instructor. Stress that they cannot touch a bare floor—that there must always be something between their foot and the floor—as they devise a method to make it to the other side.

☆ REFLECTION

After about ten minutes, stop the activity and

1. Have students write about their experiences
2. Have students share their writings with the entire class and to discuss the questions in Lesson 3 of the curriculum.

A LOOK AT DEMOCRACY

LESSON 2:

☆ **PURPOSE:**

To take a critical look at democracy including both its weaknesses and its strengths.

☆ **REFLECTION:**

"...the emotions of people in a democratic society are no more rational than they are in any other type of society. They are manipulated. It is the function of a leader in a democracy, if he wishes to be a leader, to manipulate the emotions and ideas of the population."—Joseph Heller

☆ **READ:**

Democracy is the ability to cooperate to make a decision amidst diversity and conflict which will benefit the common good. Abraham Lincoln summed up the meaning of democratic government in the Gettysburg Address in 1863 as "government of the people, by the people, for the people...."

Americans practice a type of democracy where every person (at least in theory) is equal and decisions are made by the majority, but the rights of minorities are protected. For all its drawbacks, it is considered by many to be the best form of government available and it has been a prototype for countries across the globe. Ironically, the Founding Fathers, the signers of the Constitution, saw democracy at odds with rational decision-making and never mentioned the word democracy in the Constitution.

They thought democracy equaled mob rule by people who had neither the education nor the far reaching outlook to lead a nation. It was Alexander Hamilton, an aide to General George Washington during the Revolutionary War and the first Secretary of the Treasury, who said:

> "Can a democratic assembly who annually revolve in the mass of the people be supposed steadily to pursue the public good? Nothing but a permanent body can check the imprudence of democracy."

Pure democracy is a 2,500 year old idea that was first debated by ancient Greeks. In a democracy, the citizens have a right to express an opinion, to share in the making of laws, to administer justice and to hold office. It was also the ancient Greeks who first warned of the weaknesses of majority rule—that the majority could be manipulated by a few.

The town meetings of the New England colonies were an imperfect attempt to practice pure democracy. However, as the United States has grown in area and population, we have resorted out of necessity to representative democracy. Voters elect representatives at the local, state and national levels who will take their concerns to the legislature.

Western-style democracy is replacing Communism in the former Soviet Union and in many Eastern European and African countries. However, there are questions as to whether Western-style democracy can address economic issues.

Does democracy hold the answer for unemployment and poverty?

Ghanian poet Kofi Awoonor said, "Democracy must be built on a firm foundation. In absence of this foundation, democracy is little more than a hollow ritual."

☆ VOCABULARY:

Select three to five words that you will study further.

☆ READING COMPREHENSION:

1. In a democracy, decisions are made by the majority but the rights of minorities are protected. What does this mean? Can you think of an example when this did or did not work?

2. What does Awoonor mean by "Democracy must be built on a firm foundation. In absence of this foundation, democracy is little more than a hollow ritual." Do you agree or disagree?

☆ WRITING EXERCISE:

1. There are other political systems which like democracy, have both pros and cons. Use a dictionary to look up the definition of the following terms. Discuss the advantages and disadvantages of living under such a regime. Select one of these forms of government, and discuss what you think life would be like.

socialism dictatorship communism

WHAT IS COMMUNITY?

LESSON 3:

☆ **PURPOSE:**
To examine individual definitions and beliefs about community.

☆ **REFLECTION:**
"Civic culture is the nurturing of people, places, things and institutions that create public life."—Sheldon Wolbin

☆ **DISCUSSION:**
Answer and discuss the following questions.

1. What is a community?
2. How does a community form and what keeps it together?
3. Do you live in one community or in several different communities?
4. What responsibilities do you have as a community member?
5. How is leadership determined in a community? Explain.

☆ **VIDEO ACTIVITY**

Do the Right Thing

Clip Introduction—There are forces within the community that both strengthen and weaken the community. How do racial stereotypes affect a community, especially how do they divide the community.

☆ **READING ACTIVITY:**

PURITANS COME TO AMERICA

Because they were not permitted to practice their religion, the Puritans left their native England in the 1600's. Sailing on the Mayflower, about 100 people crossed the Atlantic Ocean in 65 days and landed in what is now Massachusetts at Plymouth Rock in November 1620.

They came 13 years after the first permanent English colony had been established in Jamestown, Virginia in 1607. In fact, the Puritans were headed to Virginia when they left England that summer but were blown off course by several hundred miles.

After realizing they were beyond the governmental authority of the King of England, leaders of the Puritan party decided to organize themselves into a society before they disembarked.

Their goal was to create a society that, unlike England, would incorporate their religious doctrine with their political beliefs. They wanted to be certain that their community would be fit for the return of Christ. They wanted to shape state, society and the Church by this desire.

They practiced a form of self-government where every adult male church member was a citizen (women, African slaves, non-Puritans, children and Native Americans were excluded). Citizens were to participate in town meetings (or face a fine), in the making of major decisions and in the upholding of laws.

☆ VOCABULARY:

Use this space to record any unfamiliar words and their definitions.

☆ READING COMPREHENSION:

Answer the following questions.

1. Why did the Puritans come to America?
2. Who did they include in their new government?
3. Who was not included?
4. Can you think of reasons why they would be excluded?
5. Are there groups that are included and groups that are excluded in our current government? Explain.
6. Find Jamestown, Virginia and Plymouth, Massachusetts on the map.

☆ **EXERCISE:**

Divide into small groups to discuss the following. Have someone act as reporter to share group's opinions with the entire class.

Laws are a collection of the government's rules. As such they are a good indicator of what society will and will not tolerate. What is considered a serious offense and what is minor is best seen through the enactment and enforcement of laws and the treatment of the people who break them.

Below are several colonial New England law-breaking incidents. Read them and then discuss the following questions: What does this law tell us about the community? How does this rule strengthen the community? How does this rule weaken the community? What is different between this society and our present day society? What values are different between this society and our present day society?

LEGAL INCIDENTS IN COLONIAL NEW ENGLAND

1621 Game playing on Christmas Day by newcomers to Plymouth colony was halted by Governor William Bradford. Scandalized by the games, the governor confiscated the equipment needed to play the games.

1631 A law was passed limiting the privileges of citizenship to church members.

1634 A sumptuary law was passed in Massachusetts prohibiting the purchase of woolen, linen or silk clothes with silver, gold silk or thread lace on them. (sumptuary—regulating extravagance on religious or moral grounds)

1639 A woman accused of adultery was sentenced to be whipped, and to wear a badge on her left sleeve when out in the community with the letters AD. If found out in the community without her badge, she was to be brandedin the face with a hot iron.

1647 A public education law was passed that mandated every community of 50 homeowners maintain free elementary education. Communities of more than 100 households were required to provide secondary education as well. Later a law was passed that provided for an appointment of teachers and establishment of grammar schools.

1647 Catholic priests were forbidden to enter Puritan territory. If found the first offense was punishable by banishment, the second by death.

1647 Common law marriages, which were frequent, were declared illegal in Rhode Island. One woman, who lived with a man for 20 years, petitioned for a divorce. The court declared she was a fornicator, fined both of them and ordered them not to lead such a scandalous life.

1648 The first labor organization in America started in Massachusetts when shoemakers were allowed to meet and choose officers.

A CLASH OF PRINCIPLES

LESSON 4:

☆ **PURPOSE:**

To understand that different groups often live by different social contracts which leads to conflict.

☆ **REFLECTION:**

"The nature of men is identical; what divides them is their customs." Confucius

☆ **DISCUSSION:**

Review your response to the answers from the writing exercises of the last lesson and share them with the class.

☆ **READ:**

Colonists settled a land already inhabited by Native Americans (or Indians). When Christopher Columbus arrived in the West Indies in 1492, there were an estimated one million Indians already living in this New World, spread out among 600 different types of societies.

However, the customs and beliefs of the Indians clashed with the beliefs of the settlers, most violently around the notion of property. For Europeans, the idea of ownership of property was a natural right that should be supported by the government. Indians believed no one could possess the land and didn't understand when settlers "purchased" land and excluded Indians from fishing and hunting in the area.

The culture clash led to battles between the Native Americans and the new Americans that eventually decimated the Native American population in the United States. The quest for independence had forced a clash between two very different cultures.

☆ **VOCABULARY:**

Select three to five words you would like to study further.

☆

☆ READING COMPREHENSION:

Answer the following questions.

1. Why are Native Americans called Indians?

2. What was one of the issues that caused conflict between the colonists and the Native Americans?

3. What are the most common images of Native Americans that we see on television?

☆ DISCUSSION:

Divide into small groups. Appoint someone as a recorder to report findings to class.

Clashes of principles or conflict can be caused because different groups have a different understanding of various issues and what they mean.

Divide into small groups and record each person's individual definition of independence. Decide what conflicts would occur within the group if each person tried to carry out his or her own version of independence without regard for the others.

Now try to negotiate a consensus definition. Compare and contrast your definition with the group's. Report findings to the class.

CIVICS AND THE SOCIAL CONTRACT

LESSON 5:

☆ **PURPOSE:**

To introduce the concept of social contract and the role it plays in a community.

☆ **REFLECTION:**

"A civilized society is one whose members expect that each will address at all times, as far as possible, the rational in man; that even when I may want to bash you over the head, I will be checked by my awareness of you as a rational entity...."

☆ **READING ACTIVITY:**

MAYFLOWER COMPACT

Immediately after arriving in the New World, the Puritans established the Mayflower Compact, the first written plan for government in America which was signed by all 41 males aboard the Mayflower. The Compact stated that all male heads of families would accept any form of government that was established. They had to sign before they were allowed to disembark.

The Mayflower Compact was the country's first formal social contract. A social contract is a blueprint for society. It is a voluntary agreement in which an individual gives up some rights, gains some rights and takes certain responsibilities for the mutual benefit of the community and the individual.

Below is an excerpt from the Mayflower Compact.

"We, whose names are underwritten...having undertaken for the Glory of God, and advancement of the Christian faith, and the honor of our King and country a voyage to plant the first colony in the northern parts of Virginia do by these presents solemnly and mutually, in the presence of God and one another, covenant and combine ourselves together in a civil body politic, for our better ordering and preservation and furtherance of the ends aforesaid, and by virtue hereof do enact, constitute and frame such just and equal laws, ordinances, acts, constitutions, officers, from time to time as shall be thought most meet and convenient for the general good of the colony unto which we promise all due submission and obedience."

☆

☆ **VOCABULARY:**

Select three to five words that you would like to study.

☆ **READING COMPREHENSION:**

1. What is a social contract and why do we have them?

2. Who signed the Mayflower Compact?

3. According to the Compact, the Puritans undertook the voyage for what three reasons?

4. The Puritans thought they were in the "northern parts of Virginia," but they were really where?

5. Why did they form a "Civil body politic"?

6. To what did the signers pledge "all due submission and obedience?"

☆ **WRITING EXERCISE:**

Select one of the following questions and write your response.

1. Rewrite the Mayflower Compact in modern English.

2. The Puritans were concerned about the maintenance of good behavior and the creation of a moral community. How is this concern reflected in the Compact?

3. Compare and contrast the Mayflower Compact with our modern "Pledge of Allegiance," which was written in 1892.

4. According to the Compact, what do you think were some of the civic obligations and duties of the colonists?

5. Write a social compact for your shipwrecked companions from lesson 1.

ACTIVITY—POWER PLAY

☆ PREPARATION

You will need a piece of cloth—the larger the group the larger the cloth you will need.

☆ ACTIVITY

Have the learners stand around the cloth so that each person can grab hold of a piece of it. Explain that the person who gets hold of the entire cloth wins the game. If you let go of the cloth, you're out of the game.

☆ REFLECTION

Have the learners discuss concepts such as the need to relinquish power if you are to move from confrontation to cooperation or the group will remain in conflict.

THE SOCIAL CONTRACT: FORCES THAT UNITE

LESSON 6:

☆ **PURPOSE:**

To examine people's motivation to enter into a social contract.

☆ **REFLECTION:**

"If real democracy is going to thrive, if the real values that are deeply embedded in human nature are going to be able to flourish, groups must form in which people can join together, share their concerns, discover what they think, what they believe and what their values are."— Noam Chomsky

☆ **READING ACTIVITY:**

When you join together as a community you enter something called a social contract. To enter a social contract requires that we relinquish some of our rights to benefit from an alliance with that group.

One belief that has existed until the present day and marks American democracy is that there are certain rights that a person cannot give up. These inalienable rights (that is, rights that cannot be taken away) include the right to life, the right to liberty and the right to pursue happiness.

It was the Founding Fathers' view that the purpose of government was to protect these rights for its citizens and that if government fails in this, it can be disbanded. It was the rationale for the American Revolution as the colonists sought to sever ties with England.

Community and volunteer groups throughout the ages have been constantly plagued with the problem of unity. Therefore, it's worth thinking about what forces encourage people to enter a social contract which will unite them. Language, religion ideology—these are some things that can unite a group. Your shipwreck victims could be united in their desire for survival. Once organized, the government will enact laws to help maintain the unified community.

The Puritans used their shared religious beliefs as an organizing tool. Once they established a community in Massachusetts they enacted laws that reinforced their beliefs in the social contract. They supported a strong public school system, for example, because they thought it was necessary for everyone to be able to read the Bible. They penalized anyone who broke the social contract and thus threatened the integrity of the group.

The death penalty was established for such crimes as:

1. Worshiping any other god
2. Blasphemy
3. Sorcery
4. Adultery
5. Rape
6. A son who outrages his parents

☆ **VOCABULARY:**

Select three to five words that you wish to study.

☆ **READING COMPREHENSION:**

1. What is the purpose of a social contract?
2. What are inalienable rights?
3. What did the Puritans consider a terrible crime?
4. Do we still consider these terrible crimes? Why or why not?

☆ **DISCUSSION:**

Read the following and then discuss the following questions.

Ethnicity, religion, language and customs aren't the only things that can unite a group of people into a community. Consider the following passages and prepare to discuss your opinion of it.

THE USEFULNESS OF CRIME

The president of a local town watch group was having a difficult time getting volunteers for regular patrol and getting neighbors to attend the monthly meetings. That is, until a group of teenagers began hanging out on the corner and selling crack cocaine to passersby. The residents were so alarmed that they requested an emergency

meeting of the town watch president to begin to deal with the problem.

Crime is a major concern today. Everyone wants to feel safe in their communities. It is one of the motivations for entering into the social contract. The desire to live in a community free of crime is very strong.

Could, then, crime ever be a benefit to a community?

In 1895, Emile Durkheim first suggested the answer is yes—that crime can be a natural benefit to society.

In Durkheim's view, crime forces the community to come together, like the town watch group, and concentrate its efforts on the issue at hand. It is similar to what would happen within a community as they faced a war or natural disaster, such as the flooding of the Mississippi River during the summer of 1993.

Crime, Durkheim argued, helps to create and bring into sharp focus the values that constitute the community's conscience. It also defines the boundaries of the social contract and serves as a pedagogical (teaching) device for its new members who need to learn what is acceptable and what is not.

VOCABULARY:

Select three to five words you are unfamiliar with for further dictionary study.

DISCUSSION:

Do you agree with Durkheim's view? Explain your reasons.

Do you think that a safe community should be an unalienable right? Why or why not?

Why do you think that the United States is one of the most violent countries in the world yet we have a long history of peaceful exchange of political power?

What unspoken rules guide your community? How are they enforced?

☆ **WRITING ASSIGNMENT:**
Select one.

1. Select several different articles from a daily newspaper regarding different types of crimes. Why is this act considered a crime? What does this say about our values? Do they support Durkheim's view? Be prepared to discuss them in class.

2. Complete the following chart ("Examining Our Social Contract") and be prepared to discuss your responses during the next class. This should offer an opportunity to look closely at the "unspoken" contracts we enter. Examples of possible communities include this class, family, church, school, neighborhood, co-workers, social organizations, and friendship groups.

CASE STUDY: EXAMINING OUR SOCIAL CONTRACT

	1.	2.
	the communiy	**this class**
type of governmental system		
one expectation you have as a member of this community		
your role in the community		
one inalienable right		
something you must give up in order to be a member of this community		
one obligation or duty as a member of this community		
one benefit you receive as a member		

THE DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE

LESSON 7:

☆ **PURPOSE:**
To understand the historical context of the document.

☆ **REFLECTION:**
What does it mean to you to be happy?

☆ **READ:**
From the time the Puritans arrived at Plymouth Rock in 1629, a steady stream of settlers came to live in the colonies. As more people poured into the colonies, pressures mounted and the situation in the new colonies became tense because they were governed by a small but wealthy and powerful aristocracy.

In 1630, John Winthrop, governor of Massachusetts, summed the feeling of many of the aristocracy when he declared "...in all times some must be rich, some poor, some high and eminent in power and dignity, others mean and in subjection."

The colonies grew rapidly in the 1700's and the gap between the rich and the poor became wider. As a result there was discontent, riots and strikes. The ruling elite worked to redirect this anger towards England and her repressive policies. From this origin has come one of this country's most enduring symbols—the Declaration of Independence. Since July 4, 1776, when it was formally adopted, officially breaking the bonds between England and America, it has remained the foundation of this country's stand on equality, liberty and life.

The heart of the Declaration of Independence, which was written by Thomas Jefferson, is found in its second paragraph:

> "We hold these truths to be self-evident that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. That to secure these rights, governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed, that whenever any form of Government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the right of the people to alter or abolish it, and to institute new Government...."

☆

☆ VOCABULARY:

Select three to five words you would like to study further.

☆ READING COMPREHENSION:

Answer the following questions.

1. What do you think Thomas Jefferson meant by life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness?

2. What does it mean to you?

3. When was the Declaration of Independence formally adopted?

☆ READING:

Read the following and then write a response to the questions at the end of the selection.

Felicity, 35, was born in a poor rural community in Appalachia. The oldest of 13 children, she was often left in charge of her siblings because both of her parents were alcoholic. At 13, weary of her home life, she quit school and married Jim to "escape" her home life. By 22 she was the mother of five children. Because Jim couldn't find work, the family lived primarily on welfare.

At 30, Felicity decided to return to school. She quickly received her GED and then entered a local college. She finished school and was offered a job with a local hospital as a social worker. Although she divorced Jim, Felicity said she is more content with her life today than any other time in her life.

Felicity made two major decisions: at 13, to leave home and school and marry, and at 30, to go back to school in order to leave welfare and get a job.

☆ WRITING EXERCISE:

Imagine Felicity wrote a Declaration of Independence at 13 declaring her independent from her parents and one at 30 declaring her independence from the welfare system—what do you think each of the documents would contain? How would they be similar? How would they be different? What "unalienable" rights would Felicity contend she has?

☆

BACK-TO-BACK

☆ PREPARATION

Only need learners.

☆ ACTIVITY

Tell that group that you will need some volunteers with good backs and who want to have some fun.

Call the first volunteer and ask him/her to sit on he floor and then ask them to stand. Next tell another volunteer to come forward, sit back to back with the first volunteer and lock arms. Ask them to stand. (This will be difficult).

Continue to call on volunteers until all the volunteers are sitting in a circle, back to back and arms interlocked. Ask the group to stand.

If someone falls after getting up, the group must sit and get up again.

☆ REFLECTION

This activity help to demonstrate the difficulty with cooperation and the need to make rules that everyone can follow.

Have students write about their experiences and share their writings with the group.

UNDERSTANDING THE DECLARATION

LESSON 8:

☆ **PURPOSE:**
To closely examine the Declaration and discuss its ideals.

☆ **REFLECTION:**
"All ideas are dangerous—dangerous because ideas can only lead to action and where action leads no man can say."

☆ **DISCUSSION:**
Using the following chart, reconstruct the second paragraph of the Declaration of Independence in order to study it more closely. Discuss its literal meaning and determine its applicability in 1994. How does it apply to your life today?

DECLARATION	TRANSLATION	TODAY'S APPLICATION
We		
hold these truths to be self-evident		
that all men		
are created		
equal		
that they are endowed by their Creator		
with certain unalienable rights		

DECLARATION	TRANSLATION	TODAY'S APPLICATION
that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.		
That to secure these rights		
Governments are instituted among Men,		
Deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed		
that whenever that Form of Government becomes destructive of those ends		
it is the Right of the people to alter or abolish it,		
and to institute new Government		

☆ **DISCUSSION:**

Are the ideas expressed in the Declaration still valid today? Explain your answer.

☆ **VIDEO ACTIVITY**

Raisin in the Sun

Clip Introduction—How does the white man impinge upon the family's "pursuit of happiness"? Have you ever been in a situation where someone tried to thwart you or your family's pursuit of happiness. What did you or your family do? Do you think the family in the film will be happy?

☆ **READ:**

"I Have A Dream" by Martin Luther King. How did that speech draw upon the sentiments expressed in the Declaration of Independence? Compare and contrast the experience of reading the speech with listening to Dr. King give the speech.

DEMOCRACY IN ACTION: DEFINING GOALS

LESSON 9:

☆ **PURPOSE:**
To examine the responsibilities of government on the personal level.

☆ **REFLECTION:**
What can we do when our right to life, liberty and happiness has been harmed?

☆ **VIDEO ACTIVITY**

I Have A Dream, Color Purple

Clip Introduction—After viewing both clips, who would you say was left out of the protections and benefits guaranteed by the Declaration of Independence? Is this still true?

☆ **READING ACTIVITY:**

CASE STUDY: HUNGER IN AMERICA

Hunger is a growing problem in America. Thirty million people lack what is called food security—access to adequate food on a daily basis. Even those who receive food stamps complain that this is not sufficient to meet their monthly needs.

Some people, particularly those in rural areas, lack food security because they would rather not face the shame or embarrassment of using food stamps. Others have little knowledge, because of their isolation, of the services available to them.

To help with the problem, there are 50,000 private food banks and pantries in the United States. Managers of food banks say this is still an inadequate response to the problem. They suggest that hunger in America won't be solved until people have jobs or until there are laws governing food stamps to make certain people have adequate stamps to care for their family's needs.

☆ **DISCUSSION:**
Discuss questions with the entire class.

☆

1. Has the government's promise of life, liberty and pursuit of happiness been maintained for these 30 million people? Why or why not?

2. What exactly does the hungry citizen of America have a right to expect from the government? Use the text of the Declaration of Independence to support your answer.

3. Should a hungry citizen be treated differently than a hungry immigrant who isn't a citizen? Should a hungry law-abiding citizen be treated differently than a hungry law-breaking citizen? Should we treat all hungry citizens equally? Why or why not?

☆ **WRITING EXERCISE:**

Our government, according to the Declaration of Independence, works to help insure happiness, life and liberty for everyone. The exercise begins to probe the questions, "how well has that ideal been maintained in our individual life?" Make a list of 10 goals you have for your self, your family and your community.

MY GOALS

	Personal	**Family**	**Community**
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			
5.			
6.			
7.			
8.			
9.			
10.			

☆ **DISCUSSION:**

Take five of your most important goals from each list and explain the role the government plays or will play in helping you achieve these goals. Save your lists for future lessons.

Personal Goals	**Government Role**
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	

Family Goals	**Government Role**
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	

Community Goals	**Government Role**
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	

PREAMBLE TO THE CONSTITUTION

LESSON 10

☆ **PURPOSE:**

To examine the Preamble to the Constitution and discuss its details.

☆ **REFLECTION:**

"Democracy cannot flourish amid fear. Liberty cannot bloom amid hate. Justice cannot take root amid rage...."—Thurgood Marshall

☆ **READING ACTIVITY:**

At the time of the American Revolution, a colonist's loyalty was to the colony in which he resided. The adoption of the Declaration of Independence created 13 independent nations. The adoption of the Constitution created a new type of government—one nation with 13 states—or a federal government.

The Constitution takes the theory of the Declaration of Independence and the goals of a democracy, and puts them into practice. The Constitution of the United States of America is the oldest constitution in existence and it has changed very little since it was first adopted on September 17, 1787. President Bill Clinton took the same oath of office, as stated in the Constitution, as did the first president, George Washington.

The first part of the Constitution—the preamble—states the purposes of the Constitution. It reads as follows:

"We the people of the United States, in Order to form a more perfect Union, establish Justice, insure domestic Tranquility, provide for the common defense, promote the general Welfare and secure the Blessings of Liberty to ourselves and our Posterity, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America.

This is not just flowery prose. Every statement had a specific meaning or history—at times in conflict with the goals of democracy.

Phrase	Original Purpose
We the People	This only meant adult white male property-owners.
in Order to form a more Perfect Union	Previous attempts to create an alliance had failed.

establish Justice	For bankers and other creditors who extended loans to support the war and wished to be paid.
insure domestic Tranquility	To suppress riots.
provide for the common defense	To join in a fight against Indians and pirates.
promote the General Welfare	Increase the trade between the states and foreign nations.
secure Blessings of Liberty	To create a strong government to protect people's rights.

☆ VOCABULARY:

Select three to five words you wish to study further.

☆ READING COMPREHENSION

1. What's the purpose of the Preamble?
2. Did the phrase "we the people" include everyone?
3. What is the oath of office that Presidents take?

☆ DISCUSSION:

Debate your answer with the entire class. Support your position with specific examples.

What would you interpret the Preamble to the Constitution to mean for today's society?

☆ WRITING EXERCISE:

Consider your family as a government. You have decided to write a family constitution to explain all the rules that must be followed, but first you must state the purposes of the constitution in a preamble. Write this preamble. Be prepared to discuss the content of your preamble and the reasons for your statements.

WORKING GOVERNMENT

LESSON 11

☆ **PURPOSE:**
To better understand the government that was established by the Constitution.

☆ **REFLECTION:**
Which best represents your view of government? Why?

1. Government is the best means of accomplishing a good many basic tasks in American society.

2. Government is by its nature wasteful, bureaucratic and inefficient.

☆ **VIDEO ACTIVITY:**

Jesse Jackson Speech

Clip Introduction—Do you think most politicians understand you and the problems of your neighborhood? Why or why not? After viewing the clip, explain why Jesse Jackson is saying he is different. Who is Jesse Jackson trying to appeal to in his speech? What are the similarities between his speech and Dr. Martin Luther King's "I Have A Dream" speech?

☆ **READING ACTIVITY:**
The Constitution established a new type of government—a federal government—which called for strong powers for the nation but governed with the consent of the people through their elected representatives.

The Constitution created the three branches of government—the executive branch, the legislative branch and the judicial branch. The executive branch, headed by the president, is concerned with the administration of laws and works through a bureaucracy. The president is elected by popular vote.

The legislative branch, or Congress, is divided into the House of Representatives and the Senate. The number of representatives from each state is based upon its population, but each state sends two senators to the Senate.

Congressmembers serve for two years and senators serve for six years before having to face re-election. The legislators are concerned primarily with the enactment of laws, including any changes to the Constitution.

Finally the judicial branch is concerned with the interpretation or explanation of the laws. It is the Supreme Court, the highest court of the land, that decides if a matter is in keeping with the goals of the Constitution or not. The justices are appointed by the president and serve with the consent of the Senate.

The United States Constitution has been seen as a model of self-government and praised as a legal framework for democracy and equality, especially by countries attempting to establish democratic governments.

However, others argue that the United States government was designed to be inefficient at handling complicated problems because the Founding Fathers didn't want power concentrated in any one person's hands as it had been in the monarchy of England. But they did want a strong enough federal government to protect their interest.

They created a system of checks and balances, dividing power of government among the three branches of government as well as state and local governments, so that no one person could do great harm. However, critics suggests no one can do great good either because there is no concentration of responsibility.

Still, the Constitution has become another symbol for equality and liberty and as such is a potent legal tool for groups seeking to enjoy the rights protected by the Constitution.

☆ **VOCABULARY:**

Select three to five words that you intend to study further.

☆ **READING COMPREHENSION:**

1. What are the three branches of government?
2. What is the major responsibility of each branch?
3. What is meant by "checks and balances"?
4. Why do critics say our government is inefficient?
5. List the pros and cons of having one clear ruler.

☆

☆ **DISCUSSION EXERCISE:**

Consider your family as a governmental system, designed to promote and to protect the well-being of each of its members. Discuss the following questions.

Does your family try to ensure the rights to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness for each member? Explain.

How are decisions made and by whom?

Do members of the family have any unalienable rights? What are they?

What is most important to you—the survival of the family system or of each individual? Explain why?

What forces unite the family?

What forces threaten to divide the family?

☆ **WRITING EXERCISE:**

Select one essay question to write about.

1. Write your own family's "Preamble to the Constitution." Use it to explain the purpose behind the type of government system you have established.

2. You are unhappy and have decided to leave your family system. Write your own "Declaration of Independence."

3. You are given the opportunity to create the perfect family system. What would it look like, who would it contain, who would be the leader(s) and what would be its most important values?

☆ **RESEARCH:**

You may locate this information at your local library as well as the Committee of Seventy, a local political watchdog organization. Their phone number is 545-0104. Some of the information is also in your telephone book. Record answers in your notebook for future reference.

Who represents you in the House of Representatives?

What is her/his local address and phone number?

Of what party is he/she a member?

What congressional district do you live in?

How long has she/he been in office?

What is his/her position on one national issue of importance to you?

Who are the two Senators from your state?

What are their local addresses and phone numbers?

How long have they been in office? To what party does each belong?

What are their positions on one national issue of importance to you?

UNDERSTANDING STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

LESSON 12

☆ PURPOSE:

State and local government affect our lives more directly than federal government. This is an opportunity for students to research state and local government officials and discuss the impact they have on student's lives.

☆ REFLECTION:

"Politicians are the only native American criminal class." Mark Twain

☆ VIDEO ACTIVITY:

Harvey Milk

Clip Introduction—How do people not in the mainstream, such as racial minorities or gay and lesbian people, get political power?

☆ READ:

The state and local governments have considerable influence over the quality of the lives of their citizens.

Each state has its own constitution, setting forth clearly its rules and obligations. Consider the Preamble to the Constitution of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania:

"We, the people of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, grateful to Almighty God for the blessings of civil and religious liberty, and humbly invoking His guidance, do ordain and establish this Constitution."

Furthermore, under the Pennsylvania constitution, municipalities such as Philadelphia have a right to "frame and adopt home rule charters" which govern the municipality.

☆ DISCUSSION:

Compare and contrast the Preamble to Pennsylvania's constitution to that of the United States Constitution. What are the differences? What are the similarities?

☆ **RESEARCH:**

Using a telephone book or other appropriate tools determine who holds the following offices. Be prepared to discuss the major responsibilities of each of the office holders.

Share your understanding of their roles and discuss whether they support or hinder your efforts to achieve your personal, family and community goals as outlined in Lesson #9.

State	**Local**
Governor	Mayor
Chief Justice, Supreme Court	Sheriff
Auditor General	Controller
Attorney General	District Attorney
Your district State Senator	Your district Councilperson
Your district Leader State Representative	Your district Ward Leader

Select one of these officials and determine:

Of what party is he/she a member?

How long she/he has been in office?

His /her address and telephone number?

Choose an issue of importance to you. What do your think their position should be on this issue? Does your representative support your position? Why or why not?

☆ **WRITING EXERCISE:**

Draft a letter to your representative explaining your position.

POLITICS AND POWER

LESSON 13

☆ **PURPOSE:**

To examine how citizens use power to affect change.

☆ **REFLECTION:**

John Adams, the second president of the United States, once said of representative government that it was "destined in future history to form the brightest or the blackest page according to the use or the abuse of the political institution...."

☆ **VIDEO ACTIVITY:**

City of Hope

Clip Introduction—As you view this clip, consider the following questions. What are the problems in this community? Are they depicted accurately in the film? Do you have similar problems in your community? What do you think of the citizens' response to the problem? Do you think this could work in real life? Why or why not?

☆ **READ:**

Because this country has a representative form of government, citizens' views must be heard, if they are to be considered. Because this is a government ruled by the majority, it is important that your views become part of an active majority if your views are going to become law.

To be silent in a representative democracy is to be ignored. Only 39 percent of Americans said they contacted their elected officials in Congress in 1992, according to a recent poll.

"A minority voice is awfully loud when silence is the competition," summed author Jon Meacham in a recent issue of The Washington Monthly.

☆

Government is the structure through which we manage America, but politics is the engine that determines the direction the country will go on any given issue—from deficit reduction to trash collection.

What then is political power?

It is the ability to influence the decision-making process and determine outcomes. Political power is the ability to get things done or to make the government more responsive to their constituents and, most importantly, not limited to politicians.

Because of the rights afforded to citizens by the Constitution and the Declaration of Independence, citizens who unite provide a powerful force for affecting peaceful change in America.

Still most citizens work through politicians and through the party system. There are two major political parties in this country—the Democrats and the Republicans.

Democrats and Republicans are the two major parties in operation today. There have been attempts throughout history to create a third party by pooling together people dissatisfied with both parties. Jesse Jackson's bid for president, for example, was supported by people who felt abandoned by the Democratic Party and unwilling to become a part of the Republican Party.

☆ **VOCABULARY:**

Select three to five words that you wish to study further.

☆ **READING COMPREHENSION:**

1. What are the two major political parties in the United States?
2. Why are political parties important in the democratic process?
3. Are you a member of a political party. Why or why not?

☆

☆ EXERCISE:

1. Read several articles about politicians in your local paper. Bring in clips from the newspaper which show the differences and similarities between Republican
elected officials and Democratic elected officials. Be prepared to discuss these differences and similarities.

2. What is the difference between personal power and political power? Can you give examples of each. Can personal power become political power, and vice versa?

3. Who holds the most power—in your family, in your neighborhood, in this class? Why? How did they get the power they hold?

4. How does a politician become powerful in a democracy? How does a citizen become powerful in a democracy?

5. What are some methods citizens could use to get political power?

☆ WRITING EXERCISE:

Humorists often poke fun at political parties and politicians. Humorist Dick Gregory made the following observation in his book Dick Gregory's Political Primer:

"The situation is still more confusing when one considers that all Democrats claim to be republicans—that is, concerned with the preservation of the Republic as well as its advancement. And all Republicans claim to be democrats—that is, committed to the true ideals of democracy and operating in the best interest of the people.

So that today candidates wear party labels for identification more than anything else; much like convention delegates wear name tags."

Write an essay explaining the "joke."

THE BILL OF RIGHTS

LESSON 14

☆ **PURPOSE:**

To examine more specifically the rights afforded citizens according to the Constitution.

☆ **REFLECTION:**

What is the difference between a right and a freedom?

☆ **READ:**

The first ten amendments to the Constitution of the United States are called the Bill of Rights and were considered an essential portion of the Constitution by the Founding Fathers. The Bill of Rights is our insurance against a tyrannical government which might infringe upon our rights of liberty, of the pursuit happiness and of life.

The Bill of Rights was created in face of complaints that there was no section that clearly addressed the rights and liberties of citizens. The Preamble discussed the purpose of the Constitution and the articles addressed how the government should be structured and managed. But there was no explicit discussion of individual rights.

The Bill of Rights is supposed to be our guarantee that the federal government will not abuse its powers to suppress people, thus supporting the underlining assumption of the Declaration of Independence that government is created to protect and support an individuals rights.

There are limits placed upon these rights in an effort to keep one person from exercising a right that hurts another.

According to the Bill of Rights we have the freedom to express an opinion, the right to bear arms, freedom from unreasonable searches and seizures, the right to a jury trial and freedom from cruel and unusual punishment.

☆

☆ VOCABULARY:

Select and study between three and five words with which you are unfamiliar.

☆ READING COMPREHENSION:

1. What is the Bill of Rights?
2. Why was it created?
3. How does it protect citizens?
4. How does it keep the government from having total control?

☆ EXERCISE:

Develop a list of rights that each student has in the class. Present one of your rights in class.. Explain the limits on that right. Try to persuade students to "vote" in favor of its passage. Use the Bill of Rights as a guide.

INSIDE THE BILL OF RIGHTS

LESSON 15

☆ **PURPOSE:**

To examine and discuss more fully the Bill of Rights.

☆ **REFLECTION:**

"... Body parts are property. The person owns them and has the absolute right over what will be done with them in every situation...our Constitution is morally arbitrary."—Dr. Jack Kevorkian

☆ **READ:**

The Bill of Rights contains ten separate amendments, but these amendments protect more than thirty liberties and rights.

Some of the amendments are very well known—such as the first amendment that guarantees, among other things, freedom of speech. This was the right, for instance, that is called into question whenever someone wants to censure the lyrics of rap music or other types of songs.

The modern view of freedom of speech is that it protects not only the press and speech makers but also electronic communication such as television, radio and telecommunications.

Often times on television, you may hear someone "take the fifth." This refers to the Fifth Amendment—another well-used amendment—which among other things means that a person who is being investigated or tried cannot be forced to confess or to give testimony that might hurt himself or herself. In other words, you have the right to remain silent.

☆ **DISCUSSION:**

At te end of this manual is a list of all the rights included in the Bill of Rights. As a class, read each of the amendments and discuss what they mean and their modern day applications.

☆

☆ **VOCABULARY:**

As you read the Bill of Rights, write down any unfamiliar words you would like to study.

☆ **WRITING EXERCISE:**

Nowhere in the Bill of Rights is the word "privacy." However, the Supreme Court has ruled that Americans do in fact have a fundamental right to privacy or the right to be left alone. Write an amendment that specifically addresses the issue of privacy and guarantees an American's right to be left alone and share it with the rest of the class. Be certain to explain what you mean by privacy.

FROM THE PERSONAL TO THE POLITICAL

LESSON 16

☆ PURPOSE:

Students will examine personal, community and family goals in greater detail and discuss ways in which government supports and hinders them.

☆ REFLECTION:

"You're trying to believe in yourself. And every time you try to find a way to live, your own mind stands in the way. You know why that is? It's because others have said you were bad and made you live in bad conditions. When a man hears that over and over and looks about him and sees that life is bad, he begins to doubt his own mind. His feelings drag him forward, and his mind, full of what others say about him, tells him to go back. The job in getting people to fight and have faith is in making them believe in what life has made them feel, making them feel that their feelings are as good as those of others."—*Native Son*, Richard Wright

☆ VIDEO ACTIVITY:

Norma Rae

Clip Introduction—How does Norma Rae get power? What type of power does she have? How does she convince people to support the union? What risks does she take to do this? What would you have done in her situation? Why do you think she takes such risks?

☆ DISCUSSION:

Revisit Lesson #9 and study the personal, family and community goals you listed as being important to you.

For each goal, consider the following discussion.

1. What is the individual's responsibility if this goal is to become a reality?
2. What is the community's responsibility if this goal is to become a reality?
3. What is the government's responsibility if this goal is to become a reality?

☆

☆ GROUP DISCUSSION:

Take one problem that affects your community and list ways in which the government supports efforts to make the situation better, and ways in which it hinders efforts to improve the situation.

	Government Problem	Government Support	Hinders
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			
5.			

☆ RESEARCH:

For each problem listed, research which elected official should be contacted and advised of the situation. Explain your answers.

	Problem	Appropriate Elected Official	Explain
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			
5.			

TYPES OF ACTIONS

LESSON 17

☆ **PURPOSE:**
To examine the range of actions possible for a citizen to remedy inequality.

☆ **REFLECTION:**

☆ **READ:**

CASE STUDY—SUFFRAGISTS

When America was founded, women were not allowed to vote because it was assumed they were not capable of sound reasoning. The first time a women requested to vote was in 1639, almost 40 years after the first Puritans landed in America and introduced the idea of participatory politics.

Between 1896 and 1910, the suffragists launched 480 campaigns to get the question of giving women the vote on state ballots but they were completely unsuccessful in winning the vote in any state that didn't already allow women to vote. By 1912, only six states had granted women the right to vote.

Frustrated, some women began to look for new tactics. Carrie Chapman Catt, who believed in organizing as a way to change, was able to reach beyond the traditional middle class base and make voting an issue for immigrant and working class women, giving the movement new life.

Alice Paul, another leading suffragist, took a radical approach. For instance, she staged massive parades amid a hostile audience who shouted insults and obscenities. Parade participants were slapped, tripped and spit on as well as pelted with burning cigar butts.

Five years later, she organized a daily picketing of the White House that continued for 18 months. When arrested by police, those convicted refused to pay fines and those jailed went on hunger strikes and endured forced feeding by the authorities.

A backlash was formed by more conservative women who called Paul an extremist and feared she was doing more harm than good. However, her activities also gave life to the suffragist movement by keeping it visible.

☆

In 1920 the 19th amendment to the Constitution was passed stating:

"The right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any other state on account of sex."

☆ VOCABULARY:

Select three to five words with which you are unfamiliar and wish to study in more detail.

☆ READING COMPREHENSION:

1. Why were women not permitted to vote?
2. What methods did they use to promote their cause?
3. In which actions would you have participated? In which causes?

☆ DISCUSSION:

Divide the class into three groups, with each group discussing one issue. Have each group select a recorder to report back to the class.

Discuss the different tactics used by this "outsider" group to win the right to vote—a right heretofore only available to adult white males. Explain the pros and cons of each tactic.

Does direct action always advance a cause or does it sometimes create such a resentment that the resultant backlash pushes it further back?

Are any of the tactics used by the suffragists still valid today? Can you think of a modern version of a suffrage movement where similar tactics have been used?

☆

☆ **RESEARCH:**

Look at another group who is trying to advocate change (for example, animal rights activists, environmentalists, gay rights activists, right-to-lifers, pro-choice), what types of methods are they using to promote their cause? How successful has each of the methods been?

Gather newspaper and magazine articles on social actions and discuss them in class.

☆ **WRITING:**

Take one of the problems you discuss in the previous lesson. Suggest actions you could use to force change. Describe each action, who the participants would be and their pros and cons. Use the following table to help organize your thoughts.

Problem	Actions	Pros	Cons

FINDING SOLUTIONS

LESSON 18 & LESSON 19:

☆ **PURPOSE:**

To provide time for hands-on work regarding a community problem of personal interest.

☆ **REFLECTION:**

If you can dream—and not make dreams your master;
If you can think—and not make thoughts your aim;
If you can meet with Triumph and Disaster
And treat the two impostors just the same

from "If" by Rudyard Kipling

PUZZLE

☆ **PREPARATION**

You'll need to make several simple jigsaw puzzles out of cardboard. The pieces should not be too small and should be cut so that the assembly of the puzzle will be easy. Put the puzzle pieces into envelopes. Take two to three pieces of the puzzle from each evelope and exchange them.

☆ **ACTIVITY**

Have the class divide into groups and give each group an envelope with puzzle pieces in it. Tell the group they must put together the largest possible puzzle using all the pieces. Each group will have the beginnings of several puzzles and will need to negotiate, barter and trade with other groups to get their puzzle together.

☆ **REFLECTION**

Discuss the following questions with the entire class.

☆ **READ:**

For the next two lessons, the purpose is to take class time to work in small groups on a community problem of particular interest. Start by answering these questions. The answers may require some research and discussion with other community members.

1. Give a detailed description of the problem.

2. Why is this a problem for you? Why is it a problem for others in the community?

3. Why did you select this problem?

4. What is the history of this problem?

5. How many other people in the community feel this is a problem?

6. Who in the community doesn't feel this is a problem?

7. Do you know of other communities who faced a similar problem? Who are they?

8. How did they resolve the problem?

9. What outcome do you hope for?

10. What obstacles do you see as preventing you from achieving this outcome?

11. What support is already available to help you achieve this outcome? What community groups are addressing this problem?

12. What elected officials and government authorities should be notified about the problem? Explain what role they should play in helping to alleviate the situation.

13. Suggest one action that can be done now to help alleviate the problem and follow through on the action (for example a letter to the editor, conducting a survey of other members of the community, notifying proper officials). Describe the action you selected and explain what happened as a result.

14. In trying to solve this problem, what have you learned about the democratic process? What have you learned about the political process?

SUGGESTION FOR CHANGE

LESSON 20:

☆ **PURPOSE:**

To discuss outcome of students' projects.

☆ **REFLECTION:**

Allow students to write their own thoughts about civics, democracy, citizenship or any other issue that has arisen during this class.

☆ **DISCUSSION:**

During this final lesson, allow each student time to make an oral presentation. They should discuss the problem they worked on, the obstacles they faced, the results they achieved and what their future plans are.

EVALUATION

The reason I took this class was to:

_____

_____

What I liked the most about this class was:

_____

_____

What liked the least about this class was:

_____

_____

The amount of material covered was: (circle one)

Too much too little just about right

I would have liked to have spent more time on:

_____

I wish we would have spent less time on:

_____

To improve this class I suggest you do the following:

_____

_____

POST COURSE SURVEY

Name: _____

Date: _____

1. Are you registered to vote?

_____ yes _____ no

2. Are you an active member of any civic, community or neighborhood organization(s)?

_____ yes _____ no

3. Have you participated in a civic, community or neighborhood organization's activity within the past three years?

_____ yes _____ no

USEFUL TEXTS

☆

Preamble to the Constitution of the United States of America

We the People of the United States, in Order to form a more perfect Union, establish Justice, insure domestic Tranquility, provide for the common defence, promote the general Welfare, and secure the Blessings of Liberty to ourselves and our Posterity, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America.

The Bill of Rights to the Constitution of the United States of America

AMENDMENTS I.

Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press, or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances.

AMENDMENT II.

A well regulated Militia, being necessary to the security of a free State, the right of the people to keep and bear Arms, shall not be infringed.

AMENDMENT III.

No Soldier shall, in time of peace be quartered in any house, without the consent of the Owner, nor in time of war, but in a manner to be prescribed by law.

AMENDMENT IV.

The right of the people to be secure in their persons, houses, papers, and effects, against unreasonable searches and seizures, shall not be violated, and no Warrants shall issue, but upon probable cause, supported by Oath or affirmation, and particularly describing the place to be searched, and the persons or things to be seized.

AMENDMENT V.

No person shall be held to answer for a capital, or otherwise infamous crime, unless on a presentment or indictment of a Grand Jury, except in cases arising in the land or naval forces,

or in the Militia, when in actual service in time of War or public danger; nor shall any person be subject for the same offence to be twice put in jeopardy of life or limb, nor shall be compelled in any criminal case to be a witness against himself, nor be deprived of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law; nor shall private property be taken for public use without just compensation.

AMENDMENT VI.

In all criminal prosecutions, the accused shall enjoy the right to a speedy and public trial, by an impartial jury of the State and district wherein the crime shall have been committed; which district shall have been previously ascertained by law, and to be informed of the nature and cause of the accusation; to be confronted with the witnesses against him; to have compulsory process for obtaining witnesses in his favor, and to have the assistance of counsel for his defence.

AMENDMENT VII.

In Suits at common law, where the value in controversy shall exceed twenty dollars, the right of trial by jury shall be preserved, and no fact tried by a jury shall be otherwise re-examined in any Court of the United States, than according to the rules of the common law.

AMENDMENT VIII.

Excessive bail shall not be required, nor excessive fines imposed, nor cruel and unusual punishments inflicted.

AMENDMENT IX.

The enumeration in the Constitution of certain rights shall not be construed to deny or disparage others retained by the people.

AMENDMENT X.

The powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution, nor prohibited by it to the States, are reserved to the States respectively, or to the people.

☆

The Declaration of Independence

Action of Second Continental Congress, July 4, 1776
The unanimous Declaration of the thirteen United States of America

WHEN in the Course of human Events, it becomes necessary for one People to dissolve the Political Bands which have connected them with another, and to assume among the Powers of the Earth, the separate and equal Station to which the Laws of Nature and of Nature's God entitle them, a decent Respect to the Opinions, of Mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to the Separation.

WE hold these Truths to be self-evident, that all Men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happiness - That to secure these Rights Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just Powers from the Consent of the Governed, that whenever any Form of Government becomes destructive of these Ends, it is the Right of the People to alter or to abolish it, and to institute new Government, laying its Foundation on such Principles, and organizing its Powers in such Form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their Safety and Happiness. Prudence, in deed, will dictate that Governments long established should not be changed for light and transient Causes; and accordingly all Experience hath shown, that Mankind are more disposed to suffer, while Evils are sufferable, than to right themselves by abolishing the Forms to which they are accustomed. But when a long Train of Abuses and Usurpations, pursing invariably the same Object, evinces a Design to reduce them under absolute Despotism, it is their Right, it is their Duty, to throw off such Government, and to provide new Guards for their future Security. Such has been the patient Sufferance of these Colonies; and such is now the Necessity which constrains them to alter their former Systems of Government. The History of the present King of Great-Britain is a History of repeated Injuries and usurpations, all having in direct Object the Establishment to an absolute Tyranny over these States. To prove this, let Facts be submitted to a candid World.

HE has refused his Assent to Laws, the most wholesome and necessary for the public Good.

HE has forbidden his Governors to pass Laws of immediate and pressing Importance, unless suspended in their Operation till his Assent should be obtained; and when so suspended, he has utterly neglected to attend to them.

HE has refused to pass other Laws for the Accommodation of large Districts of People, unless those People would relinquish the Right of Representation in the Legislature, a Right inestimable to them, and formidable to Tyrants only.

HE has called together Legislative Bodies at Places unusual, uncomfortable, and distant from the Depository of their public Records, for the sole Purpose of fatiguing them into Compliance with his Measures.

HE has dissolved Representative Houses repeatedly, for opposing with manly Firmness his Invasions on the Rights of the People.

HE has refused for a long Time, after such Dissolutions, to cause others to be elected; whereby the Legislative Powers, incapable of Annihilation, have returned to the Peoples at large for their exercise; the State remaining in the mean time exposed to all the Dangers of Invasion from without, and Convulsions within.

HE has endeavoured to prevent the Population of these States; for that Purpose obstructing the Laws for Naturalization of Foreigners; refusing to pass others to encourage their Migrations hither, and raising the Conditions of new Appropriations of Lands.

HE has obstructed the Administration of Justice, by refusing his Assent to Laws for establishing Judiciary Powers.

HE has made Judges dependent on his Will alone, for the Tenure of their offices, and the Amount and payment of their Salaries.

HE has erected a Multitude of new Offices, and sent hither Swarms of Officers to Harrass our People, and eat out their Substance.

HE has kept among us, in Time of Peace, Standing Armies, without the consent of our Legislatures.

HE has combined with others to subject us to a Jurisdiction foreign to our constitution, and unacknowledged by our laws; giving his assent to their Acts of pretended Legislation:

FOR quartering large Bodies of Armed Troops among us:

FOR protecting them, by a mock Trial, from Punishment for any Murders which they should commit on the Inhabitants of these States:

FOR cutting off our Trade with all Parts of the World:

FOR imposing Taxes on us without our Consent:

FOR depriving us, in many Cases, of the Benefits of Trial by Jury:

FOR transporting us beyond Seas to be tried for pretended Offences:

FOR abolishing the free System of English Laws in a neighbouring Province, establishing therein an arbitrary Government, and enlarging its Boundaries, so as to render it at once an Example and fit Instrument for introducing the same absolute Rule into these Colonies:

FOR taking away our Charters, abolishing our most valuable Laws, and altering fundamentally the Forms of our Governments:

☆

FOR suspending our own Legislatures, and declaring themselves invested with Power to Legislate for us in all Cases whatsoever.

HE has abdicated Government here, by declaring us out of his Protection and waging War against us.

He has plundered our Seas, ravaged our Coasts, burnt our Towns, and destroyed the Lives of our People.

HE is, at this Time, transporting large Armies of foreign Mercenaries to compleat the Works of Death, Desolation, and Tyranny, already begun with circumstances of Cruelty and Perfidy, scarcely paralleled in the most barbarous Ages, and totally unworthy the Head of a civilized Nation.

HE has constrained our fellow Citizens taken Captive on the high Seas to bear Arms against their Country, to become the Executioners of their Friends and Brethren, or to fall themselves by their Hands.

HE as excited domestic Insurrections amongst us, and has endeavoured to bring on the Inhabitants of our Frontiers, the merciless Indian Savages, whose known Rule of Warfare, is an undistinguished Destruction, of all Ages, Sexes and Conditions.

IN every stage of these Oppression we have Petitioned for Redress in the most humble Terms: Our repeated Petitions have been answered only by repeated Injury. A Prince, whose Character is thus marked by every act which may define a Tyrant, is unfit to be the Ruler of a free People.

NOR have we been wanting in Attentions to our British Brethren. We have warned them from Time to Time of Attempts by their Legislature to extend an unwarrantable Jurisdiction over us. We have reminded them of the Circumstances of our Emigration and Settlement here. We have appealed to their native Justice and Magnanimity, and we have conjured them by the Ties of our common Kindred to disavow these Usurpations, which would inevitably interrupt our Connections and Correspondence. They too have been deaf to the Voice of Justice and of Consanguinity. We must, therefore, acquiesce in the Necessity, which denounces our Separation, and hold the, as we hold the rest of Mankind, Enemies in War, in Peace, Friends.

WE, therefore, the Representatives of the UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, in GENERAL CONGRESS, Assembled, appealing to the Supreme Judge of the World for the Rectitude of our Intentions, do, in the Name, and by Authority of the good People of these Colonies, solemnly Publish and Declare, That these United Colonies are, and of Right ought to be, Free and Independent States; that they are absolved from all Allegiance to the British Crown, and that all political Connection between them and the estate of Great-Britain, is and ought to be totally dissolved; and that as FREE AND INDEPENDENT STATES; that they are absolved from all Allegiance to the British Crown, and that all political Connection between them and the State of Great-Britain, is and ought to be totally dissolved; and that as FREE AND INDEPENDENT STATES, they have full power to Leavy War, conclude Peace, contract Alliances, establish Commerce, and to do all other Acts and Things which INDEPENDENT STATES may of right do. And for the support of this Declaration, with a firm Reliance on the protection of divine Providence, we mutually pledge to each other our Lives, our Fortunes, and our sacred Honor.

I Have a Dream

Martin Luther King, Jr.

Five score years ago, a great American, in whose symbolic shadow we stand, signed the Emancipation Proclamation. This momentous decree came as a great beacon light of hope to millions of Negro slaves who had been seared in the flame of withering injustice. It came as a joyous daybreak to end the long night of captivity.

But one hundred years later, we must face the tragic fact that the Negro is still not free. One hundred years later, the life of the Negro is still sadly crippled by the manacles of segregation and the chains of discrimination. One hundred years later, the Negro lives on a lonely island of poverty in the midst of a vast ocean of material prosperity. One hundred years later, the Negro is still anguishing in the corners of American society and finds himself an exile in his own land. So we have come here today to dramatize an appalling condition.

In a sense we have come to our nation's capital to cash a check. When the architects of our republic wrote the magnificent words of the Constitution and the Declaration of Independence, they were signing a promissory note to which every American was to fall heir. This note was a promise that all men would be guaranteed the unalienable rights of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

It is obvious today that America has defaulted on this promissory note insofar as her citizens of color are concerned. Instead of honoring this sacred obligation, America has given the Negro people a bad check; a check which has come back marked "insufficient funds." But we refuse to believe that the bank of injustice is bankrupt. We refuse to believe that there are insufficient funds in the great vaults of opportunity of this nation. So we have come to cash this check - a check that will give us upon demand the riches of freedom and the security of justice. We have also come to this hallowed spot to remind America of the fierce urgency of now. This is no time to engage in the luxury of cooling off or to take the tranquilizing drugs of gradualism. Now is the time to make real the promises of Democracy. Now is the time to rise from the dark and desolate valley of segregation to the sunlit path of racial justice. Now is the time to open the doors of opportunity to all of God's children. Now is the time to lift our nation from the quicksands of racial injustice to the solid rock of brotherhood.

It would be fatal for the nation to overlook the urgency of the moment and to underestimate the determination of the Negro. This sweltering summer of the Negro's legitimate discontent will not pass until there is an invigorating autumn of freedom and equality. 1963 is not an end, but a beginning. Those who hope that the Negro needed to blow off steam and will now be content will have a rude awakening if the nation returns to business as usual. There will be neither rest nor tranquility in America until the Negro is granted his citizenship rights. The whirlwinds of revolt will continue to shake the foundations of our nation until the bright day of justice merges.

But there is something that I must say to my people who stand on the warm

threshold which leads into the palace of justice. In the process of gaining our rightful place we must not be guilty of wrongful deeds. Let us not seek to satisfy our thirst for freedom by drinking from the cup of bitterness and hatred. We must forever conduct our struggle on the high plane of dignity and discipline. We must not allow our creative protest to degenerate into physical violence. Again and again we must rise to the majestic heights of meeting physical force with soul force. The marvelous new militancy which has engulfed the Negro community must not lead us to a distrust of all white people, for many of our white brothers, as evidenced by their presence here today, have come to realize that their destiny is tied up with our destiny and their freedom is inextricably bound to our freedom. We cannot walk alone.

And as we walk, we must make the pledge that we shall march ahead. We cannot turn back. There are those who are asking the devotees of civil rights, "When will you be satisfied?" We can never be satisfied as long as the Negro is the victim of the unspeakable horrors of police brutality. We can never be satisfied as long as our bodies, heavy with the fatigue of travel, cannot gain lodging in the motels of the highways and the hotels of the cities. We cannot be satisfied as long as the Negro's basic mobility is from a smaller ghetto to a larger one. We can never be satisfied as long as a Negro in Mississippi cannot vote and a Negro in New York believes he has nothing for which to vote. No, No, we are not satisfied, and we will not be satisfied until justice rolls down like waters and righteousness like a mighty stream.

I am not unmindful that some of you have come here out of great trials and tribulations. Some of you have come fresh from narrow jail cells. Some of you have come from areas where your quest for freedom left you battered by the storms of persecution and staggered by the winds of police brutality. You have been the veterans of creative suffering. Continue to work with the faith that unearned suffering is redemptive.

Go back to Mississippi, go back to Alabama, go back to South Carolina, go back to Georgia, go back to Louisiana, go back to the slums and ghettos of our northern cities, knowing that somehow this situation can and will be changed. Let us not wallow in the valley of despair.

I say to you today, my friends, that in spite of the difficulties and frustrations of the moment I still have a dream. It is a dream deeply rooted in the American dream.

I have a dream that one day this nation will rise up and live out the true meaning of its creed: "We hold these truths to be self-evident: that all men are created equal."

I have a dream that one day on the red hills of Georgia the sons of former slaves and the sons of former slaveowners will be able to sit down together at the table of brotherhood.

I have a dream that one day even the state of Mississippi, a desert state sweltering with the heat of injustice and oppression, will be transformed into an oasis of freedom and justice.

I have a dream that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin but by the content of their character.

I have a dream today.

I have a dream that one day the state of Alabama, whose governor's lips are presently

dripping with the words of interposition and nullification, will be transformed into a situation where little black boys and black girls will be able to join hands with little white boys and white girls and walk together as sisters and brothers.

I have a dream today.

I have a dream that one day every valley shall be exalted, every hill and mountain shall be made low, the rough places will be made plain, and the crooked places will be made straight, and the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together.

This is our hope. This is the faith with which I return to the South. With this faith we will be able to hew out of the mountain of despair a stone of hope. With this faith we will be able to transform the jangling discords of our nation into a beautiful symphony of brotherhood. With this faith we will be able to work together, to pray together, to struggle together, to go to jail together, to stand up for freedom together, knowing that we will be free one day.

This will be the day when all of God's children will be able to sing with new meaning

My Country, 'tis of thee,
Sweet land of liberty,
Of thee I sing:
Land where my fathers died,
Land of the pilgrims' pride,
From every mountain-side
Let freedom ring.

And if America is to be a great nation this must become true. So let freedom ring from the prodigious hilltops of New Hampshire. Let freedom ring from the mighty mountains of New York. Let freedom ring from the heightening Alleghenies of Pennsylvania!

Let freedom ring from the snowcapped Rockies of Colorado!

Let freedom ring from the curvaceous peaks of California!

But not only that; let freedom ring from Stone Mountain of Georgia!

Let freedom ring from Lookout Mountain of Tennessee!

Let freedom ring from every hill and molehill of Mississippi. From every mountainside, let freedom ring.

When we let freedom ring, when we let it ring from every village and every hamlet, from every state and every city, we will be able to speed up the day when all of god's children black men and white men, Jews and Gentiles, Protestants and Catholics, will be able to join hands and sing in the words of the old Negro spiritual, "Free at last! free at last! thank God almighty, we are free at last!"

☆

The following text was developed by a class participating in the pilot test of the "Education for Democracy" manual.

A Declaration of My Independence

In the Wharton Center, April 24th, 1994
My Declaration of Independence from Drugs and Alcohol

In the course of one's life, it becomes necessary for a person to end the ties which have connected him with another, and to admit his powerlessness over them. And declare the causes which impel him to the separation.

I hold this truth to be self-evident, that I am created equal, and that I am endowed by my Creator with certain unalienable Rights, among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.

Whenever any Form of Drugs and Alcohol becomes destructive to these ends, it is the Right of the person to alter or abolish it, and to institute a new way of life, laying the foundation on such principles as are found in the Groups of Alcoholics and Narcotics Anonymous to secure the likely effect of my Safety and Happiness. Wisdom, indeed, will dictate that a way of life long established should not be changed for light and transient causes.

Prudence indeed has dictated that our health and welfare should not be changed for light and transient experiences. History has shown that many people are more disposed to suffer than to right ourselves from our self destruction. When a long train of abuses and usurpations is pursuing our self destruction, it is our duty to throw off such abuses and to build a new foundation for future security.

Such is the present suffering of many people involved in the grip of addiction. The history of the present King of addiction "Cocaine" has caused repeated injury and established absolute tyrany over many lives. To prove this, let the facts be submitted:

- ❑ This King has repeatedly had me imprisoned even though I was only following the Kings orders, to rob, steal, hurt, etc.
- ❑ This King has caused me to inflict pain on the people I hold most dear, my family and friends, even causing me to steal from them.
- ❑ This King has caused me the loss of many a nights sleep, the loss of jobs, the loss of My lover (Mother to my children), and the loss of my children.
- ❑ This King has deprived me a Happy home life, in fact, this King eventually took (by force) my home, my auto, and many other valuables.

- ❑ This King has repeatedly taken whole paychecks right out of my own pocket denying me weekly such necessities as food and clothing.

- ❑ This King is such a tyrant that he has even compelled me to compromise my own morals.

- ❑ To Continue, this King has plundered my seas, ravaged my Coasts, burned my towns, and destroyed the lives of my people.

- ❑ He is at this time transporting large quantities of Himself to foreign mercenaries to complete the works of his death, desolation and tyranny, already begun with circumstances of Cruelty and punishment scarcely paralleled in even the most barbarous ages, and is therefore totally unworthy to be the ruler of this life, this civilized life.

In every stage of these Oppressions I have Petitioned for relief in the most humble terms: My repeated Petitions have been answered only by repeated injury. A Prince, whose character is thus marked by every act which may define a Tyrant, is unfit to be the ruler of a free life.

I, therefore, do, in the Name of my Higher Power (that being God), and with the help of Alcoholics and Narcotics Anonymous solemnly publish and declare, that this life is, and by Right ought to be, Free and Independent from this King, and all his princes, captains, and all his armies (these being all forms of drugs, drug dealers, alcohol etc.) that I am absolved from all allegiance to this King and his crown, and that all connection between Him and I is and ought "to be totally dissolved; and that as a Free and Independent Man, I have full Power to levy War, conclude Peace, contract New Friends, establish Commerce, and to do all other Acts and things that Independent men have the right to do.

And for the support of this Declaration, with a firm reliance on the protection of divine Providence, I pledge my life to my Higher Power, and to fellow recovering addicts, my fortunes and my sacred Honor.

HANDOUTS

The following pages are reprints of exercises and readings from the curriculum that might be useful for xeroxing and distributing to your class.

☆

Lesson 1: INTRODUCTION

☆ **READ:**

It is clear that some system of rules is needed to address these issues. That is exactly what a government is—a system of rules used to manage a community.

Throughout the ages, people have been grappling with the best way to govern and thus manage conflict, diversity and limited resources. Here are a few of the most common methods:

anarchy	absence of government
aristocracy	government by a hereditary clan of nobles or government of the "best" people
autocracy	government by one person with absolute power such as a dictator
bureaucracy	government through a complex structure of administrative bureaus
democracy	government by the people
gerontocracy	government by elderly people
meritocracy	government by those with highest academic achievement
monarchy	government by a single ruler such as a king
oligarchy	government by a small privileged class
plutocracy	government by wealthy or a group of wealthy people who control or influence government
theocracy	government of priests claiming to rule with authority from God

SHIPWRECK

☆ PREPARATION

Assign learner identities of shipwreck victims that are suggested in the first lesson—orphaned children, injured people, naturalists, doctors etc. To make the exercise more interesting, assign more specific roles. For example:

1. One of the orphaned children refuses to come along.
2. One of the hurt persons is delirious and incoherent.
3. Some of the survivors are unconccious.

☆ ACTIVITY

Place learners in one corner of the class, which represents the island upon which they are shipwrecked, and present them with the following challenge:

"You are shipwrecked on this island and you are surrounded by water (represented by the bare floor). The water contains man-eating sharks which will devour you if you touch the water. Your task is to get off the rock and go to the mainland (the opposite corner of the class) without touching the water (bare floor). If anyone touches the bare floor, that learner is out and all the other learners must begin again.

Allow students ten minutes to work through the exercise without input from the instructor. Stress that they cannot touch a bare floor—that there must always be something between their foot and the floor—as they devise a method to make it to the other side.

☆

LESSON 2: A LOOK AT DEMOCRACY

☆ **READ:**

Democracy is the ability to cooperate to make a decision amidst diversity and conflict which will benefit the common good. Abraham Lincoln summed up the meaning of democratic government in the Gettysburg Address in 1863 as "government of the people, by the people, for the people...."

Americans practice a type of democracy where every person (at least in theory) is equal and decisions are made by the majority, but the rights of minorities are protected. For all its drawbacks, it is considered by many to be the best form of government available and it has been a prototype for countries across the globe. Ironically, the Founding Fathers, the signers of the Constitution, saw democracy at odds with rational decision-making and never mentioned the word democracy in the Constitution.

They thought democracy equaled mob rule by people who had neither the education nor the far reaching outlook to lead a nation. It was Alexander Hamilton, an aide to General George Washington during the Revolutionary War and the first Secretary of the Treasury, who said:

> "Can a democratic assembly who annually revolve in the mass of the people be supposed steadily to pursue the public good? Nothing but a permanent body can check the imprudence of democracy."

Pure democracy is a 2,500 year old idea that was first debated by ancient Greeks. In a democracy, the citizens have a right to express an opinion, to share in the making of laws, to administer justice and to hold office. It was also the ancient Greeks who first warned of the weaknesses of majority rule—that the majority could be manipulated by a few.

The town meetings of the New England colonies were an imperfect attempt to practice pure democracy. However, as the United States has grown in area and population, we have resorted out of necessity to representative democracy. Voters elect representatives at the local, state and national levels who will take their concerns to the legislature.

Western-style democracy is replacing Communism in the former Soviet Union and in many Eastern European and African countries. However, there are questions as to whether Western-style democracy can address economic issues.

Does democracy hold the answer for unemployment and poverty?

Ghanian poet Kofi Awoonor said, "Democracy must be built on a firm foundation. In absence of this foundation, democracy is little more than a hollow ritual."

LESSON 3: WHAT IS COMMUNITY?

☆ **READING ACTIVITY:**

PURITANS COME TO AMERICA

Because they were not permitted to practice their religion, the Puritans left their native England in the 1600's. Sailing on the Mayflower, about 100 people crossed the Atlantic Ocean in 65 days and landed in what is now Massachusetts at Plymouth Rock in November 1620.

They came 13 years after the first permanent English colony had been established in Jamestown, Virginia in 1607. In fact, the Puritans were headed to Virginia when they left England that summer but were blown off course by several hundred miles.

After realizing they were beyond the governmental authority of the King of England, leaders of the Puritan party decided to organize themselves into a society before they disembarked.

Their goal was to create a society that, unlike England, would incorporate their religious doctrine with their political beliefs. They wanted to be certain that their community would be fit for the return of Christ. They wanted to shape state, society and the Church by this desire.

They practiced a form of self-government where every adult male church member was a citizen (women, African slaves, non-Puritans, children and Native Americans were excluded). Citizens were to participate in town meetings (or face a fine), in the making of major decisions and in the upholding of laws.

☆

☆ EXERCISE:

Divide into small groups to discuss the following. Have someone act as reporter to share group's opinions with the entire class.

Laws are a collection of the government's rules. As such they are a good indicator of what society will and will not tolerate. What is considered a serious offense and what is minor is best seen through the enactment and enforcement of laws and the treatment of the people who break them.

Below are several colonial New England law-breaking incidents. Read them and then discuss the following questions: What does this law tell us about the community? How does this rule strengthen the community? How does this rule weaken the community? What is different between this society and our present day society? What values are different between this society and our present day society?

LEGAL INCIDENTS IN COLONIAL NEW ENGLAND

1621 Game playing on Christmas Day by newcomers to Plymouth colony was halted by Governor William Bradford. Scandalized by the games, the governor confiscated the equipment needed to play the games.

1631 A law was passed limiting the privileges of citizenship to church members.

1634 A sumptuary law was passed in Massachusetts prohibiting the purchase of woolen, linen or silk clothes with silver, gold silk or thread lace on them. (sumptuary—regulating extravagance on religious or moral grounds)

1639 A woman accused of adultery was sentenced to be whipped, and to wear a badge on her left sleeve when out in the community with the letters AD. If found out in the community without her badge, she was to be brandedin the face with a hot iron.

1647 A public education law was passed that mandated every community of 50 homeowners maintain free elementary education. Communities of more than 100 households were required to provide secondary education as well. Later a law was passed that provided for an appointment of teachers and establishment of grammar schools.

1647 Catholic priests were forbidden to enter Puritan territory. If found the first offense was punishable by banishment, the second by death.

1647 Common law marriages, which were frequent, were declared illegal in Rhode Island. One woman, who lived with a man for 20 years, petitioned for a divorce. The court declared she was a fornicator, fined both of them and ordered them not to lead such a scandalous life.

1648 The first labor organization in America started in Massachusetts when shoemakers were allowed to meet and choose officers.

LESSON 4: A CLASH OF PRINCIPLES

☆ **READ:**

Colonists settled a land already inhabited by Native Americans (or Indians). When Christopher Columbus arrived in the West Indies in 1492, there were an estimated one million Indians already living in this New World, spread out among 600 different types of societies.

However, the customs and beliefs of the Indians clashed with the beliefs of the settlers, most violently around the notion of property. For Europeans, the idea of ownership of property was a natural right that should be supported by the government. Indians believed no one could possess the land and didn't understand when settlers "purchased" land and excluded Indians from fishing and hunting in the area.

The culture clash led to battles between the Native Americans and the new Americans that eventually decimated the Native American population in the United States. The quest for independence had forced a clash between two very different cultures.

☆

LESSON 5: CIVICS AND THE SOCIAL CONTRACT

☆ READING ACTIVITY:

MAYFLOWER COMPACT

Immediately after arriving in the New World, the Puritans established the Mayflower Compact, the first written plan for government in America which was signed by all 41 males aboard the Mayflower. The Compact stated that all male heads of families would accept any form of government that was established. They had to sign before they were allowed to disembark.

The Mayflower Compact was the country's first formal social contract. A social contract is a blueprint for society. It is a voluntary agreement in which an individual gives up some rights, gains some rights and takes certain responsibilities for the mutual benefit of the community and the individual.

Below is an excerpt from the Mayflower Compact.

"We, whose names are underwritten...having undertaken for the Glory of God, and advancement of the Christian faith, and the honor of our King and country a voyage to plant the first colony in the northern parts of Virginia do by these presents solemnly and mutually, in the presence of God and one another, covenant and combine ourselves together in a civil body politic, for our better ordering and preservation and furtherance of the ends aforesaid, and by virtue hereof do enact, constitute and frame such just and equal laws, ordinances, acts, constitutions, officers, from time to time as shall be thought most meet and convenient for the general good of the colony unto which we promise all due submission and obedience."

ACTIVITY—POWER PLAY

☆ PREPARATION

You will need a piece of cloth—the larger the group the larger the cloth you will need.

☆ ACTIVITY

Have the learners stand around the cloth so that each person can grab hold of a piece of it. Explain that the person who gets hold of the entire cloth wins the game. If you let go of the cloth, you're out of the game.

☆ REFLECTION

Have the learners discuss concepts such as the need to relinquish power if you are to move from confrontation to cooperation or the group will remain in conflict.

☆

LESSON 6: THE SOCIAL CONTRACT: FORCES THAT UNITE

☆ **READING ACTIVITY:**

When you join together as a community you enter something called a social contract. To enter a social contract requires that we relinquish some of our rights to benefit from an alliance with that group.

One belief that has existed until the present day and marks American democracy is that there are certain rights that a person cannot give up. These inalienable rights (that is, rights that cannot be taken away) include the right to life, the right to liberty and the right to pursue happiness.

It was the Founding Fathers' view that the purpose of government was to protect these rights for its citizens and that if government fails in this, it can be disbanded. It was the rationale for the American Revolution as the colonists sought to sever ties with England.

Community and volunteer groups throughout the ages have been constantly plagued with the problem of unity. Therefore, it's worth thinking about what forces encourage people to enter a social contract which will unite them. Language, religion ideology—these are some things that can unite a group. Your shipwreck victims could be united in their desire for survival. Once organized, the government will enact laws to help maintain the unified community.

The Puritans used their shared religious beliefs as an organizing tool. Once they established a community in Massachusetts they enacted laws that reinforced their beliefs in the social contract. They supported a strong public school system, for example, because they thought it was necessary for everyone to be able to read the Bible. They penalized anyone who broke the social contract and thus threatened the integrity of the group.

The death penalty was established for such crimes as:

1. Worshiping any other god
2. Blasphemy
3. Sorcery
4. Adultery
5. Rape
6. A son who outrages his parents

☆

☆ **DISCUSSION:**

Read the following and then discuss the following questions.

Ethnicity, religion, language and customs aren't the only things that can unite a group of people into a community. Consider the following passages and prepare to discuss your opinion of it.

THE USEFULNESS OF CRIME

The president of a local town watch group was having a difficult time getting volunteers for regular patrol and getting neighbors to attend the monthly meetings. That is, until a group of teenagers began hanging out on the corner and selling crack cocaine to passersby. The residents were so alarmed that they requested an emergency meeting of the town watch president to begin to deal with the problem.

Crime is a major concern today. Everyone wants to feel safe in their communities. It is one of the motivations for entering into the social contract. The desire to live in a community free of crime is very strong.

Could, then, crime ever be a benefit to a community?

In 1895, Emile Durkheim first suggested the answer is yes—that crime can be a natural benefit to society.

In Durkheim's view, crime forces the community to come together, like the town watch group, and concentrate its efforts on the issue at hand. It is similar to what would happen within a community as they faced a war or natural disaster, such as the flooding of the Mississippi River during the summer of 1993.

Crime, Durkheim argued, helps to create and bring into sharp focus the values that constitute the community's conscience. It also defines the boundaries of the social contract and serves as a pedagogical (teaching) device for its new members who need to learn what is acceptable and what is not.

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☆ WRITING ASSIGNMENT

Complete the following chart and be prepared to discuss your responses during the next class. This should offer an opportunity to look closely at the "unspoken" contracts we enter. Examples of possible communities include this class, family, church, school, neighborhood, co-workers, social organizations, and friendship groups.

CASE STUDY: EXAMINING OUR SOCIAL CONTRACT

	1.	2.
	the communiy	this class
type of governmental system		
one expectation you have as a member of this community		
your role in the community		
one inalienable right		
something you must give up in order to be a member of this community		
one obligation or duty as a member of this community		
one benefit you receive as a member		

LESSON 7: THE DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE

☆ **READ:**

From the time the Puritans arrived at Plymouth Rock in 1629, a steady stream of settlers came to live in the colonies. As more people poured into the colonies, pressures mounted and the situation in the new colonies became tense because they were governed by a small but wealthy and powerful aristocracy.

In 1630, John Winthrop, governor of Massachusetts, summed the feeling of many of the aristocracy when he declared "...in all times some must be rich, some poor, some high and eminent in power and dignity, others mean and in subjection."

The colonies grew rapidly in the 1700's and the gap between the rich and the poor became wider. As a result there was discontent, riots and strikes. The ruling elite worked to redirect this anger towards England and her repressive policies. From this origin has come one of this country's most enduring symbols—the Declaration of Independence. Since July 4, 1776, when it was formally adopted, officially breaking the bonds between England and America, it has remained the foundation of this country's stand on equality, liberty and life.

The heart of the Declaration of Independence, which was written by Thomas Jefferson, is found in its second paragraph:

> "We hold these truths to be self-evident that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. That to secure these rights, governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed, that whenever any form of Government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the right of the people to alter or abolish it, and to institute new Government...."

☆

☆ READING:

Read the following and then write a response to the questions at the end of the selection.

Felicity, 35, was born in a poor rural community in Appalachia. The oldest of 13 children, she was often left in charge of her siblings because both of her parents were alcoholic. At 13, weary of her home life, she quit school and married Jim to "escape" her home life. By 22 she was the mother of five children. Because Jim couldn't find work, the family lived primarily on welfare.

At 30, Felicity decided to return to school. She quickly received her GED and then entered a local college. She finished school and was offered a job with a local hospital as a social worker. Although she divorced Jim, Felicity said she is more content with her life today than any other time in her life.

Felicity made two major decisions: at 13, to leave home and school and marry, and at 30, to go back to school in order to leave welfare and get a job.

☆ WRITING EXERCISE:

Imagine Felicity wrote a Declaration of Independence at 13 declaring her independent from her parents and one at 30 declaring her independence from the welfare system—what do you think each of the documents would contain? How would they be similar? How would they be different? What "unalienable" rights would Felicity contend she has?

BACK-TO-BACK

☆ ACTIVITY

Tell that group that you will need some volunteers with good backs and who want to have some fun.

Call the first volunteer and ask him/her to sit on he floor and then ask them to stand. Next tell another volunteer to come forward, sit back to back with the first volunteer and lock arms. Ask them to stand. (This will be difficult).

Continue to call on volunteers until all the volunteers are sitting in a circle, back to back and arms interlocked. Ask the group to stand.

If someone falls after getting up, the group must sit and get up again.

☆ REFLECTION

This activity help to demonstrate the difficulty with cooperation and the need to make rules that everyone can follow.

Have students write about their experiences and share their writings with the group.

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LESSON 8: UNDERSTANDING THE DECLARATION

☆ **DISCUSSION:**

Using the following chart, reconstruct the second paragraph of the Declaration of Independence in order to study it more closely. Discuss its literal meaning and determine its applicability in 1994. How does it apply to your life today?

DECLARATION	TRANSLATION	TODAY'S APPLICATION
We		
hold these truths to be self-evident		
that all men are created equal		
that they are endowed by their Creator		
with certain unalienable rights		
that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.		
That to secure these rights		
Governments are instituted among Men,		
Deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed		
that whenever that Form of Government becomes destructive of those ends		
it is the Right of the people to alter or abolish it,		
and to institute a new Government		

LESSON 9: DEMOCRACY IN ACTION: DEFINING GOALS

☆ **READING ACTIVITY:**

CASE STUDY: HUNGER IN AMERICA

Hunger is a growing problem in America. Thirty million people lack what is called food security—access to adequate food on a daily basis. Even those who receive food stamps complain that this is not sufficient to meet their monthly needs.

Some people, particularly those in rural areas, lack food security because they would rather not face the shame or embarrassment of using food stamps. Others have little knowledge, because of their isolation, of the services available to them.

To help with the problem, there are 50,000 private food banks and pantries in the United States. Managers of food banks say this is still an inadequate response to the problem. They suggest that hunger in America won't be solved until people have jobs or until there are laws governing food stamps to make certain people have adequate stamps to care for their family's needs.

☆ **DISCUSSION:**

Discuss questions with the entire class.

1. Has the government's promise of life, liberty and pursuit of happiness been maintained for these 30 million people? Why or why not?

2. What exactly does the hungry citizen of America have a right to expect from the government? Use the text of the Declaration of Independence to support your answer.

3. Should a hungry citizen be treated differently than a hungry immigrant who isn't a citizen? Should a hungry law-abiding citizen be treated differently than a hungry law-breaking citizen? Should we treat all hungry citizens equally? Why or why not?

☆

☆ WRITING EXERCISE:

Our government, according to the Declaration of Independence, works to help insure happiness, life and liberty for everyone. The exercise begins to probe the questions, "how well has that ideal been maintained in our individual life?" Make a list of 10 goals you have for your self, your family and your community.

MY GOALS

Personal	Family	Community
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		
5.		
6.		
7.		
8.		
9.		
10.		

☆ **DISCUSSION:**

Take five of your most important goals from each list and explain the role the government plays or will play in helping you achieve these goals. Save your lists for future lessons.

Personal Goals	**Government Role**
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	
Family Goals	**Government Role**
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	
Community Goals	**Government Role**
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	

☆

LESSON 10: PREAMBLE TO THE CONSTITUTION

☆ READING ACTIVITY:

At the time of the American Revolution, a colonist's loyalty was to the colony in which he resided. The adoption of the Declaration of Independence created 13 independent nations. The adoption of the Constitution created a new type of government—one nation with 13 states—or a federal government.

The Constitution takes the theory of the Declaration of Independence and the goals of a democracy, and puts them into practice. The Constitution of the United States of America is the oldest constitution in existence and it has changed very little since it was first adopted on September 17, 1787. President Bill Clinton took the same oath of office, as stated in the Constitution, as did the first president, George Washington.

The first part of the Constitution—the preamble—states the purposes of the Constitution. It reads as follows:

"We the people of the United States, in Order to form a more perfect Union, establish Justice, insure domestic Tranquility, provide for the common defense, promote the general Welfare and secure the Blessings of Liberty to ourselves and our Posterity, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America.

This is not just flowery prose. Every statement had a specific meaning or history—at times in conflict with the goals of democracy.

Phrase	Original Purpose
We the People	This only meant adult white male property-owners.
in Order to form a more Perfect Union	Previous attempts to create an alliance had failed.
establish Justice	For bankers and other creditors who extended loans to support the war and wished to be paid.
insure domestic Tranquility	To suppress riots.
provide for the common defense	To join in a fight against Indians and pirates.
promote the General Welfare	Increase the trade between the states and foreign nations.
secure Blessings of Liberty	To create a strong government to protect people's rights.

LESSON 11: WORKING GOVERNMENT

☆ READING ACTIVITY:

The Constitution established a new type of government—a federal government—which called for strong powers for the nation but governed with the consent of the people through their elected representatives.

The Constitution created the three branches of government—the executive branch, the legislative branch and the judicial branch. The executive branch, headed by the president, is concerned with the administration of laws and works through a bureaucracy. The president is elected by popular vote.

The legislative branch, or Congress, is divided into the House of Representatives and the Senate. The number of representatives from each state is based upon its population, but each state sends two senators to the Senate.

Congressmembers serve for two years and senators serve for six years before having to face re-election. The legislators are concerned primarily with the enactment of laws, including any changes to the Constitution.

Finally the judicial branch is concerned with the interpretation or explanation of the laws. It is the Supreme Court, the highest court of the land, that decides if a matter is in keeping with the goals of the Constitution or not. The justices are appointed by the president and serve with the consent of the Senate.

The United States Constitution has been seen as a model of self-government and praised as a legal framework for democracy and equality, especially by countries attempting to establish democratic governments.

However, others argue that the United States government was designed to be inefficient at handling complicated problems because the Founding Fathers didn't want power concentrated in any one person's hands as it had been in the monarchy of England. But they did want a strong enough federal government to protect their interest.

They created a system of checks and balances, dividing power of government among the three branches of government as well as state and local governments, so that no one person could do great harm. However, critics suggests no one can do great good either because there is no concentration of responsibility.

Still, the Constitution has become another symbol for equality and liberty and as such is a potent legal tool for groups seeking to enjoy the rights protected by the Constitution.

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LESSON 12: UNDERSTANDING STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

☆ RESEARCH:

Using a telephone book or other appropriate tools determine who holds the following offices. Be prepared to discuss the major responsibilities of each of the office holders.

Share your understanding of their roles and discuss whether they support or hinder your efforts to achieve your personal, family and community goals as outlined in Lesson #9.

STATE	LOCAL
Governor	Mayor
Chief Justice, Supreme Court	Sheriff
Auditor General	Controller
Attorney General	District Attorney
Your district State Senator	Your district Councilperson
Your district Leader State Representative	Your district Ward Leader

Select one of these officials and determine:

Of what party is he/she a member?

How long she/he has been in office?

His /her address and telephone number?

Choose an issue of importance to you. What do your think their position should be on this issue? Does your representative support your position? Why or why not?

LESSON 13: POLITICS AND POWER

☆ **READ:**

Because this country has a representative form of government, citizens' views must be heard, if they are to be considered. Because this is a government ruled by the majority, it is important that your views become part of an active majority if your views are going to become law.

To be silent in a representative democracy is to be ignored. Only 39 percent of Americans said they contacted their elected officials in Congress in 1992, according to a recent poll.

"A minority voice is awfully loud when silence is the competition," summed author Jon Meacham in a recent issue of The Washington Monthly.

Government is the structure through which we manage America, but politics is the engine that determines the direction the country will go on any given issue—from deficit reduction to trash collection.

What then is political power?

It is the ability to influence the decision-making process and determine outcomes. Political power is the ability to get things done or to make the government more responsive to their constituents and, most importantly, not limited to politicians.

Because of the rights afforded to citizens by the Constitution and the Declaration of Independence, citizens who unite provide a powerful force for affecting peaceful change in America.

Still most citizens work through politicians and through the party system. There are two major political parties in this country—the Democrats and the Republicans.

Democrats and Republicans are the two major parties in operation today. There have been attempts throughout history to create a third party by pooling together people dissatisfied with both parties. Jesse Jackson's bid for president, for example, was supported by people who felt abandoned by the Democratic Party and unwilling to become a part of the Republican Party.

☆

LESSON 14: THE BILL OF RIGHTS

☆ **READ:**

The first ten amendments to the Constitution of the United States are called the Bill of Rights and were considered an essential portion of the Constitution by the Founding Fathers. The Bill of Rights is our insurance against a tyrannical government which might infringe upon our rights of liberty, of the pursuit happiness and of life.

The Bill of Rights was created in face of complaints that there was no section that clearly addressed the rights and liberties of citizens. The Preamble discussed the purpose of the Constitution and the articles addressed how the government should be structured and managed. But there was no explicit discussion of individual rights.

The Bill of Rights is supposed to be our guarantee that the federal government will not abuse its powers to suppress people, thus supporting the underlining assumption of the Declaration of Independence that government is created to protect and support an individuals rights.

There are limits placed upon these rights in an effort to keep one person from exercising a right that hurts another.

According to the Bill of Rights we have the freedom to express an opinion, the right to bear arms, freedom from unreasonable searches and seizures, the right to a jury trial and freedom from cruel and unusual punishment.

LESSON 15: INSIDE THE BILL OF RIGHTS

☆ **READ:**

The Bill of Rights contains ten separate amendments, but these amendments protect more than thirty liberties and rights.

Some of the amendments are very well known—such as the first amendment that guarantees, among other things, freedom of speech. This was the right, for instance, that is called into question whenever someone wants to censure the lyrics of rap music or other types of songs.

The modern view of freedom of speech is that it protects not only the press and speech makers but also electronic communication such as television, radio and telecommunications.

Often times on television, you may hear someone "take the fifth." This refers to the Fifth Amendment—another well-used amendment—which among other things means that a person who is being investigated or tried cannot be forced to confess or to give testimony that might hurt himself or herself. In other words, you have the right to remain silent.

☆ **WRITING EXERCISE:**

Nowhere in the Bill of Rights is the word "privacy." However, the Supreme Court has ruled that Americans do in fact have a fundamental right to privacy or the right to be left alone. Write an amendment that specifically addresses the issue of privacy and guarantees an American's right to be left alone and share it with the rest of the class. Be certain to explain what you mean by privacy.

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LESSON 16: FROM THE PERSONAL TO THE POLITICAL

☆ GROUP DISCUSSION:

Take one problem that affects your community and list ways in which the government supports efforts to make the situation better, and ways in which it hinders efforts to improve the situation.

Problem	Government Support	Government Hinders
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		
5.		

☆ RESEARCH:

For each problem listed, research which elected official should be contacted and advised of the situation. Explain your answers.

Problem	Appropriate Elected Official	Explain
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		
5.		

LESSON 17: TYPES OF ACTIONS

☆ **READ:**

CASE STUDY—SUFFRAGISTS

When America was founded, women were not allowed to vote because it was assumed they were not capable of sound reasoning. The first time a women requested to vote was in 1639, almost 40 years after the first Puritans landed in America and introduced the idea of participatory politics.

Between 1896 and 1910, the suffragists launched 480 campaigns to get the question of giving women the vote on state ballots but they were completely unsuccessful in winning the vote in any state that didn't already allow women to vote. By 1912, only six states had granted women the right to vote.

Frustrated, some women began to look for new tactics. Carrie Chapman Catt, who believed in organizing as a way to change, was able to reach beyond the traditional middle class base and make voting an issue for immigrant and working class women, giving the movement new life.

Alice Paul, another leading suffragist, took a radical approach. For instance, she staged massive parades amid a hostile audience who shouted insults and obscenities. Parade participants were slapped, tripped and spit on as well as pelted with burning cigar butts.

Five years later, she organized a daily picketing of the White House that continued for 18 months. When arrested by police, those convicted refused to pay fines and those jailed went on hunger strikes and endured forced feeding by the authorities.

A backlash was formed by more conservative women who called Paul an extremist and feared she was doing more harm than good. However, her activities also gave life to the suffragist movement by keeping it visible.

In 1920 the 19th amendment to the Constitution was passed stating:

"The right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any other state on account of sex."

☆

LESSONS 18 & 19: FINDING SOLUTIONS

PUZZLE

☆ PREPARATION

You'll need to make several simple jigsaw puzzles out of cardboard. The pieces should not be too small and should be cut so that the assembly of the puzzle will be easy. Put the puzzle pieces into envelopes. Take two to three pieces of the puzzle from each evelope and exchange them.

☆ ACTIVITY

Have the class divide into groups and give each group an envelope with puzzle pieces in it. Tell the group they must put together the largest possible puzzle using all the pieces. Each group will have the beginnings of several puzzles and will need to negotiate, barter and trade with other groups to get their puzzle together.

☆ REFLECTION

Discuss the following questions with the entire class.

☆ READ:

For the next two lessons, the purpose is to take class time to work in small groups on a community problem of particular interest. Start by answering these questions. The answers may require some research and discussion with other community members.

1. Give a detailed description of the problem.

2. Why is this a problem for you? Why is it a problem for others in the community?

3. Why did you select this problem?

4. What is the history of this problem?

5. How many other people in the community feel this is a problem?

6. Who in the community doesn't feel this is a problem?

7. Do you know of other communities who faced a similar problem? Who are they?

8. How did they resolve the problem?

9. What outcome do you hope for?

10. What obstacles do you see as preventing you from achieving this outcome?

11. What support is already available to help you achieve this outcome? What community groups are addressing this problem?

12. What elected officials and government authorities should be notified about the problem? Explain what role they should play in helping to alleviate the situation.

13. Suggest one action that can be done now to help alleviate the problem and follow through on the action (for example a letter to the editor, conducting a survey of other members of the community, notifying proper officials). Describe the action you selected and explain what happened as a result.

14. In trying to solve this problem, what have you learned about the democratic process? What have you learned about the political process?